

# Education Briefing Note Index Spring Session 2023

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**Comprehensive Mental Health Approach (RISE)**

Education

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**Mental Health Supports for School Staff and Students: refer to TAB SSS04**

**Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response—Mental Health and Wellness Approach:**

- We take the mental wellness of students seriously, particularly as we move forward from the pandemic, and we are continually assessing the needs of students.
- The Department of Education is developing a comprehensive Mental Health and Wellness Approach. This is an important part of the overall work we are doing to reimagine inclusive and special education.
- Our Mental Health and Wellness Approach will include prevention and promotion of positive mental health, as well as intervention supports and responses in and out of school.
- The approach will be developmentally and culturally responsive.
- It will align with Yukon's Mental Health Strategy and be guided by the recommendations from the Yukon Youth Calls to Action – 2022 Youth Summit, which brings forward important perspectives from youth on supports that work for them.
- We are striving to create stronger connections to mental health and well-being supports, and resources provided in communities by

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**Comprehensive Mental Health Approach (RISE)**

Education

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partners and stakeholders as well as those offered within the school setting.

**Additional response—counsellors:**

- The department is looking at the School Counsellor program to ensure it meets the current needs of students.
- Based on what we hear we will look at creating a Wellness Coordinator program or something similar for every school, which is a key commitment as part of CASA.
- Meeting the mental health needs of students requires flexibility and diversity in the approach, including raising awareness of how to support mental well-being for all students.
- We are looking at approaches from inclusive, culturally appropriate programs, to targeted services for acute mental health challenges including clinical counsellors.
- It is also important that we take the time now to do the foundational work of engaging with our partners to inform a program that will meet the diverse needs of students.
- Clinical counselling support is important; however, it is only one aspect of the comprehensive mental health approach we take in Yukon schools.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- \$500k is in place in Education's budget beginning April 1st, 2023 to support mental health and wellness for Yukon students and schools.

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**Comprehensive Mental Health Approach (RISE)**

Education

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- There is constant public conversation and demand for more mental health supports – especially for youth – in light of the pandemic and the opioid crisis.
- The Yukon Association of Education Professionals and Child and Youth Advocate Office have been advocating for clinical counsellors in each Yukon school.
- CASA: commits to an additional annual investment of \$1 million (across YG) for mental health outcomes for youth and create dedicated wellness counsellors or similar positions in all schools specifically dedicated to addressing the need for comprehensive mental health and wellness.

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**Background:**

- For acute mental health challenges, school-based staff help students and families connect with the most appropriate supports that are available within a community, including clinical counselling services.
- The school counsellor plays an essential role in supporting the well-being of students.
- We continue to hear a need for greater flexibility with the duties of this role in order to reflect a school community's needs and to address staffing challenges when filling these positions.
- We partner with Yukon First Nation governments and organizations to ensure that student supports are culturally responsive and include coordinated work with students and families (First Nation advocates, ESWs and CELCs).
- As an example, this fall we launched Ready-to-Learn Schools, a developmentally responsive approach that helps educators understand how trauma and toxic stress impacts brain development, functioning and learning.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

3/21/2023

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****COVID-19 Two-Year Recovery Strategy**

Education

**Value:**

- We are committed to providing all students with the supports they need for their individual recovery.

**Recommended response:**

- We recognize that the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have not been the same for all students. For some, learning has been lost, for others, mental health and wellbeing has been negatively impacted.
- Educators are using a two-year pandemic recovery plan to support learners. The plan focuses on key priorities, including inclusive and special education, mental health and wellness, numeracy, literacy, and core competencies.
- It is important for educators to continue to meet learners where they are at, and to provide students with tailored supports.
- To understand a student's overall needs, we need to look at them academically, culturally, emotionally, and physically.

**Additional response:**

- The recovery plan continues work on RISE (Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education), implementing recommendations from the 2019 audit, decolonizing the Department of Education, and implementing the Safer Schools Action Plan.
- The Department of Education recently launched a Culturally Responsive Literacy Strategy Working group and a Culturally Responsive Numeracy Strategy Working group to develop a longer-term strategy for programming in schools.

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### **COVID-19 Two-Year Recovery Strategy**

Education

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- All of this important work will support recovery for Yukon students.
- Five hundred thousand dollars is in place beginning April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 to support mental health and wellness for Yukon students and schools.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Learning has been lost during the pandemic due to decreased face-to-face instruction.
- Mental health and wellness of students and staff may be at varying levels due to the pandemic.
- Data on numeracy and literacy shows a decrease in overall performance during the pandemic.

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#### **Background:**

- The Curriculum and Assessment program budget ensures alignment of resources purchased with the Yukon Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Recovery Plan including updated resources to support literacy and numeracy.
- The Mental Health and Wellness budget provides support and resources to students which is a priority identified in the Yukon Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Recovery Plan.
- The Yukon Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Recovery Plan – Guidelines for Schools provides direction to Yukon public schools to deliver K-12 educational programs and supports in line with territorial pandemic recovery efforts in the 2022-24 school years by:
  - acknowledging where we have been;
  - clarifying key priorities;
  - identifying supports for key priorities including working with First Nations to address the unique educational learning needs of their communities; and
  - including links to additional information and resources that can support decision-making and communication.



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**COVID-19 Two-Year Recovery Strategy**

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

3/29/2023

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

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**CSFY Request for School in Dawson**

Education

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**Value:**

- We work collaboratively with the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon – CSFY – to support the learning needs of French First Language students and the path for the administration of French First Language education in the territory.

**Recommended response:**

- Work continues in respect to CSFY's request for the establishment of a French First language school in Dawson City.
- This is a priority for the Francophone school board and Francophone parents in Dawson, and our government recognizes their interest in expanding French First language schooling in the Yukon.
- We are working with the CSFY, as well as Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in under section 17.7 of its Self-Government Agreement, on French First language programming in Dawson.

**Additional response:**

- This school year, French First language students in Dawson have access to enhanced activities through the École Nomade home schooling program.
- The CSFY and the Department of Education have established an effective working relationship and officials will continue to navigate and approach the work ahead in a good way.
- There are many steps involved and we are committed to working collaboratively with our partners.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****CSFY Request for School in Dawson****Education**

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- CSFY has requested that a French first language school be established in Dawson City.
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**Background:**

- The feasibility study submitted on February 28, 2022, to the Minister of Education, remains under review, as the Department of Education continues to assess the feasibility of the proposed program.
- Under s.23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, French and English linguistic minorities in Canada have a constitutional right to publicly funded primary and secondary school education in their own language, where the number of rights holders warrant.
- The government is legally obliged to both address CSFY's request under O.I.C. 2016/156 and address Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in's concerns through negotiations under section 17.7 of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Self-Government Agreement.
- In response to CSFY's request for an update on this initiative, Minister McLean and the DM met with CSFY's officials and trustees on December 9, 2022.
- In December 2022, a permanent teacher was hired for the École Nomade home schooling program. This teacher began on February 6, 2023. The main duties are to provide support and services to families in Dawson enrolled in école Nomade. This will include support to parents for home schooling and after school activities.
- On September 27, 2022, CSFY submitted an update to the section of the Feasibility Study concerning the potential number of students for a French First Language school in Dawson.
- At that time, CSFY communicated a preference to pause the Dawson Francophone School Committee meetings until the Government approves the updated Feasibility Study report.
- 15 right-holder students (Category 1 and 2) from Kindergarten to Grade 4 are pre-registered for the 2023-2024 school year.
- On December 16, 2022, Statistics Canada released the regional, 2021 Census results, which for the first time identified minority French language rights holders. This shows a total of 40 school-aged children (0-19) in Dawson, and 20 in the

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Education

grades CSFY seeks to establish. This provides baseline data for identifying future population trends.

- CSFY originally requested that the school be established by August 2022. They publicly announced on March 24th (blog) and April 4th (CBC) that the project was proceeding for the start of the 2022-23 school year.
- On July 5th, CSFY sent a letter to Dawson parents to inform them of CSFY's decision to delay the opening of the Francophone school.
- CSFY has rented a space that will allow them to offer resources in French for families through the home education program as well as to continue offering organized activities for families and their children.
- On May 25, 2022, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in expressed concerns about the potential impact to its citizens on the establishment of a French First Language program in Dawson.
- Department officials continue to meet with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in officials to address their concerns.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****3/1/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Formal Assessments (RISE)**Education

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**Value:**

- The 2019 Audit and the final report of the Review of Inclusive and Special Education tell us that we have to rethink how we're supporting students and delivering timely, effective supports for their learning needs.

**Recommended response:**

- We are developing criteria around prioritizing assessments and ensuring student learning needs are being addressed.
- The length of time to perform an assessment is dependent on the complexity of the student's needs, the nature of the assessment needed and schedule of the professional administering the assessment.
- If an assessment is needed, we will make sure that it is done within six months. If this work cannot be done within the department, we will contract this work out or we will reimburse parents to the assessment done privately.
- We have allocated additional funding of \$150K to outsource additional assessments. We have contracts in place to do this work.
- If a student needs a formal assessment, school staff can still implement many strategies, supports, and accommodations recommended through school-based teams and informal assessments to address the learning needs of the students so that they can be successful at school.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Formal Assessments (RISE)**Education

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- Along with other student support staff working in our schools and our central administration building, Speech-Language Pathologists are an essential support that we will continue to make available to address the learning needs of the students so that they can be successful at school.

**Additional response:**

- When an educator and/or parent has concerns about a student's learning, the first step is for the school-based team to discuss the student's needs and collaborate on what strategies or interventions should be implemented by school staff to support the student.
- If a referral is received from the school-based team, Student Support Services staff determine the type of assessments needed based on the nature of the need presented by the school based team and a review of the student's file.
- The Department of Education's Educational Psychologists work with each school to determine the priority for student assessments.
- A school may request specific or further support from Student Support Services, through an informal or formal assessment of the student's learning needs.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Auditor General of Canada made recommendations relating to this issue in their 2019 report (Recommendation #70).
- External stakeholders were invited to a Spark session focused on assessments in July, which may lead to questions around recommendations and actions.
- CBC aired a story about parents saying assessments were taking 2-3 years and that they had to pay for their own private assessments.

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- CASA commitment: to provide, complete, and deliver the final report for psychoeducational assessments necessary to obtain an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) within six months of referrals from teachers, administrators or physicians. If the Government is unable to provide the assessment directly within this timeframe, it shall cover expenses incurred by parents to obtain the assessment externally

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**Background:**

- Students do not have to have a formal assessment in order to receive learning supports at school.
- The Education Act provides the framework for special education programs, including an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- Under the Act, school administration, in consultation with professional staff and parents, determines whether a student has special educational needs, and the appropriate special education program to meet those needs.
- School-based teams are made up of the school principal, learning assistance teacher, classroom teacher, other school staff and staff from Student Support Services. Parents are also valued members of the SBT. Other professionals may also be invited.
- A parent may request a school-based team meeting at any time for their child through their school.
- Sometimes the department/school is unable to obtain parent consent or a student's attendance issues may complicate the assessment process.

Current referral process for formal assessments

1. A concern is identified by the educator or parent.
2. The school-based team collects and reviews the relevant information.
3. The school-based team invites relevant Student Support Services staff to participate, based on the nature of the concern or issue that has been identified. This could include informal assessments where specific interventions may be recommended before a formal assessment is requested.
4. If an information assessment/consultation was done and the recommended interventions are not working, then Student Support Services staff and the



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Formal Assessments (RISE)**

Education

school-based team make recommendations for a formal assessment. Parental consent is required for formal assessments.

5. Based on the referral, Student Support Services staff respond by providing the services needed to support the student. Priority is given for a formal assessment when the student's learning is being severely impeded.
6. Student Support Services staff continue to work with school staff to support the student's learning by monitoring the student's needs and collaborating on programming to support the student's learning.

Speech language pathologists

- There are 4.0 FTE allocated in Student Support Services for Speech Language Pathologists. There is currently 1 FTE vacancy.
- We partner with the Child Development Centre, Mobile Therapeutic Unit and Health and Social Services for the provision of additional Speech and Language Pathologist services.
- Currently, we are contracting a local speech and language pathologist clinic to provide support and services (identifying need, developing support plans, training staff to implement articulation programming and fluency assessment and intervention).

**Approved by:**

Mary Cameron

03/15/2023

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Gadzoosdaa****Education**

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**Value:**

- The Department of Education offers various supports to families when students leave their communities to attend school.

**Recommended response:**

- The Department of Education works with staff and the Gadzoosdaa Advisory Committee to provide a safe, caring and enriched living environment for rural students pursuing learning opportunities in Whitehorse.
- We are committed to ensuring the program is effectively resourced and meeting today's needs and values – with a student-centred focus.
- A consultant is leading a program renewal process to look at how the needs have changed since the residence opened, and what is required for today's programming needs.

**Additional response:**

- Staffing and recruitment will be a key pillar of the program renewal as we agree that relationships and stability for the student and staff are important.
- The renewal work is targeted to be completed by the end of May or early June of this year.
- At the Gadzoosdaa Student Residence Advisory Committee meeting on April 6, 2023, our consultants shared the new timelines for the renewal process. Previously we had planned to have the renewal complete by early April. Current conversations are rich and engaging and we want to ensure everyone participating in the discussions feel heard.

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- Additional resources and staffing are being provided while the program renewal is completed.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Concerns have been raised about staffing levels at the residence.

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**Background:**Staffing concerns

- Some staff at Gadzoosdaa believe there is not an adequate staffing allotment to support programming for students in residence. Concerns are related to permanent staff being covered with casual staff in the short term.
- Several emails with regards to staffing and programming, and potentially the closure of the facility, have been received by the department.
- Departmental staff met with the staff at Gadzoosdaa Residence and the Advisory Committee to better understand their challenges with service delivery and resourcing.
- Additional staff supports were immediately put in place to ensure effective program delivery. These will remain in place until the program renewal is completed.
- A program renewal, led by IRP Consulting with input of the Advisory Committee, First Nations and the Department of Education will start in winter 2023. It will look at the mandate of the residence, staffing, culturally-relevant programming and student transportation. The outcome will inform 2023-24 operations and resourcing.
- The annual operating budget of \$1.39 million has not been reduced and there is no intent to close the residence.
- Financial and human resource allocations at Gadzoosdaa have been and continue to remain stable.
- Staffing levels were never reduced and have been as follows:
  - 10.8 FTEs – 2012 to 2018
  - 11.8 FTEs – 2019-20
  - 11.8 FTEs – 2020-21
  - 11.8 FTEs – 2021-22

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- 11.8 FTEs – 2022-23
- A Gadzoosdaa Advisory Meeting was held October 28, 2022 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The Advisory Committee recommended the following:
  - Restore previous staffing schedule to pre-COVID schedule (4-5 staff from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. and 2-3 staff from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.);
  - Work with the advisory committee to address student transportation concerns and options;
  - When program renewal happens, the original 5 First Nations must be included as partners in the process as well as the union; and
  - Recommend more Indigenization through programming and staff (partnership approach).

Gadzoosdaa Student Residence

- Students who are required to live outside their home community to attend school in Whitehorse may be provided with:
  - Accommodation at the Gadzoosdaa Student Residence in Whitehorse, which includes a travel subsidy; or
  - Certain travel subsidies to help offset travel costs to and from home communities during the school year.
- We are guided by the requirements of the *Education Act* and regulations, and we ensure that students receive the support they need in a fiscally responsible and equitable way.
- Gadzoosdaa Student Residence in Whitehorse is operating this school year — guided by operational plans developed in consultation with the CMOH office.

Transportation allowances for rural students attending high school in Whitehorse

- Over the years, certain practices developed similar to ‘transportation allowances’, where rural students coming to Whitehorse to attend high school are reimbursed for the cost of travel to and from their home communities during the school year.
- The department clarified its legislated responsibilities in order to ensure consistent application of the requirements of the Student Transportation Regulations. The maximum amount payable prescribed in M.O. 2004/10 must be adhered to in all circumstances.
- The following principles are now being applied to travel subsidy requests:
  - Students staying at Gadzoosdaa Student Residence because a specific secondary school program is not available in their community will be

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entitled to a travel subsidy for expenses they incur for travelling to and from their home community during the school year, up to the maximum amount payable under M.O. 2004/10.

- Students moving to Whitehorse, those staying in a private residence because a specific secondary high school program is not available in their community and they were not able to stay in the Gadzoosdaa Student Residence are entitled to a travel subsidy. This does not apply if students are living with one or both parents in Whitehorse.
- Students who choose to come to Whitehorse to attend high school when a high school program that is appropriate to their needs is available in their community will not be entitled to a travel subsidy.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****04/19/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

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**Hidden Valley School – Supports, Reviews-Investigations,  
Legal Education**

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**Safer Schools Policies and Procedures: refer to TAB SSS06.**

**Autism Specialist Project: refer to TAB SSS01**

**Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response—CYAO report:**

- We appreciate the work of the Child and Youth Advocate.
- We accepted all of the report recommendations in principle and are committed to continuing system-wide corrective action.
- The report's recommendations have helped us re-examine, refine and enhance our existing commitments to ensure a strengthened student and child-centred approach.
- We will ensure the wellbeing of Yukon children remains at the centre of our decision-making and actions. There is nothing more important than the safety and protection of students when they are in our care.
- We have taken significant action and will continue to address the issues that have been identified in the reports that we have received to date.

**Recommended response—Supports for families and staff**

**Autism Specialist Project: refer to TAB SSS01**

- The Department of Education is aware that the Crown stayed some of the charges against William Auclair-Bellemare.
- We understand that other charges are still active and are before the court. As such, I will not be commenting on these court matters.

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**Hidden Valley School – Supports, Reviews-Investigations,  
Legal Education**

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- Knowing these court matters may impact students, families and staff in different ways, we provided information to the school community reminding them of the supports available to them.
- Minister McPhee and I sent a personal apology last fall to the Hidden Valley School Community, which included a commitment to do better.
- I continue to hold up the dedicated staff at Hidden Valley who are ensuring children feel connected, supported and safe at school.
- A range of supports, including access to counselling, will continue to be available. No family will be left behind.
- Staffing support was strengthened starting in 2021.
- We've continued to provide this support in how we schedule, assign and support staff in their learning.
- We currently have a full-time Principal and a full-time Vice-Principal at the school.
- In the 2022-23 school year, we hired a dedicated Learning Assistance Teacher to serve students with neuro-diversity and to provide programming and direct teaching in collaboration with Educational Assistants, Administrators, families and fellow staff members.
- This teacher develops and implements, Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), and ensures inclusion within the school community while facilitating ongoing communication with families.
- In the 2023-24 school year, there will be an additional neuro-diversity classroom.



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- To clarify my comment during the Supplementary budget debate on March 16, 2023: a clinical counsellor continues to be available to support students on an ongoing basis. Supports and referrals from the Child and Youth and Family Treat Team can be available at the school and outside the school.
- Clinical counselling support is important; however, it is only one aspect of the comprehensive mental health approach we take in Yukon schools.
- We will be working closely with the Hidden Valley administration and school community on their needs for the 2023-24 year.

**RCMP report:**

- Under the Safer Schools Action Plan, our government committed to working with the RCMP to create a new inter-agency agreement for the investigation of child abuse and provide training for those responsible in each department.
- And work is well underway to develop corporate policies and procedures for information sharing with the RCMP on matters involving the investigation of alleged criminal conduct by an employee.

**Safer Schools Action Plan:**

- We are also making real change to ensure we put the right policies and supports in place.
- For the Department of Education, key initiatives include enhancing our screening and hiring processes, partnering with the Canadian Center for Child Protection and Family and Children's Services to provide training to school staff on their Duty to Report, and a new Safer Schools Policy and procedures as well as Post-Incident Communications Guidance, which outlines expectations for ongoing communication with families in various scenarios.

## **Session Briefing Note**

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### **Hidden Valley School – Supports, Reviews-Investigations, Legal**

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### **Education**

- We've trained all school administrators and teaching staff on these policies and procedures.
  - We are also working to ensure all school support staff and adults working in school settings, including school councils, are trained as well.
- 

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Recent media coverage on stayed charges against William Auclair-Bellemare.
  - The RCMP Independent Officer Review was released on October 17, 2022.
  - CYAO report *Responding to Sexualized Abuse in Yukon Schools: Review of Policies and Governmental Response* was tabled in October 2022.
  - YG response to the CYAO report was tabled on November 23, 2022.
  - A report from the Ombudsman is forthcoming.
  - An open letter was sent from HVES School Council with specific asks for
    - An additional 1.0 FTE for a 2 year term VP
    - A clinical counsellor, licensed to practice in YT, assigned to HVES for a 2 year term.
- 

#### **Background:**

##### Supports at the school

- The Crown stayed 4 of the charges against William Auclair-Bellemare for sexual offences against a student. Other charges are still active and are before the court. Families and staff were provided information reminding them of the supports available on February 15.
  - The response to the school community is intentionally dynamic. All children and families are unique in how they react to various experiences and we listen to the concerns to respond in an appropriate manner with the best direct supports.
  - Supports have and continue to be available to families and staff. Examples (not all) include
    - Supports coordinated as needed via the School Community Consultant, school administration and staff to services through Family and Children's Services, Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services, and Victim Services.
    - Available directly from Whitehorse-Based Private Practitioner, Marie Fast who provides emotional support and counselling for families, helps participants to focus on
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**Hidden Valley School – Supports, Reviews-Investigations,  
Legal Education**

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self-care and well-being of their families, and helps parents to find ways to discuss relevant issues with their children.

- Mental Wellness and Substance Use facilitated a 6-session parent support group that involved evening sessions with a clinical counsellor and an outreach worker. This was held off-site to best accommodate the requests and privacy of families.
- The Child and Youth and Family Treatment Team has been attending the school to monitor the needs of staff, students and families; providing service to parents and families; and delivered sessions on resilience and social-emotional skills for grade 5, 6, and 7 students.
- Staff presentations on services and supports available to them, including crisis counselling services through LifeWorks and information on the broader Employee and Family Assistance program.

**Approved by:**

**Kelli Taylor**

**3/22/2023**

\_\_\_\_\_  
a/Deputy Minister, Department of Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Jack Hulland – Grove Street Concerns and Investigation  
around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion**

Education

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**Value:**

- All students and staff have the right to a safe and inclusive learning environment.

**Recommended response:**

- In the fall of 2021, allegations were raised about the use of holds, restraints and seclusion at Jack Hulland Elementary School.
- We are working to communicate with and assist students, families, and staff as much as we are able in order for them to access support and make informed decisions while also not compromising the RCMP investigation.
- A range of free-of-charge supports continue to be available to students, families and staff as we navigate these complex matters.

**Investigations and legal matters—holds and restraints:**

- We are fully cooperating with the RCMP's criminal investigation, which is ongoing, and the RCMP have communicated to families that it is being led as a priority.
- As an employer, we have an obligation and are committed to learning more about the conduct of our employees and what happened.
- These matters are complex and of a most serious nature and will take time to complete.
- Given this is an ongoing matter before the courts, we will not be commenting on the specific allegations outlined in the statement of claim filed.

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**Jack Hulland – Grove Street Concerns and Investigation  
around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion** Education

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**Requests for student records:**

- The Department of Education is fully cooperating with the RCMP as they complete their investigation.
- As a result, there are some items that are not being provided by the Department of Education due to the investigation.
- Any further questions regarding the investigation should be referred to the RCMP.
- We will work with all individuals who have requested records to provide as much information as we are able to provide to make informed decisions and to access supports.
- We do not want this to prevent families from accessing support.
- The past year has been exceptionally challenging for many members of the Jack Hulland Elementary School community and supports are available to anyone who has been affected by this.

**Administration / supporting staff:**

- There is a dedicated team of teachers and staff at Jack Hulland school, and the administrative team is focused on moving the school forward in a good way.
- An on-site counsellor has been available for school staff and teachers since November and they continue to provide supports on an ongoing basis.
- Group and individual supports will continue to be available to staff including through the Employee and Family Assistance Program with LifeWorks or Canada Life benefits.

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### **Jack Hulland – Grove Street Concerns and Investigation around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion**

Education

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- We have set clear expectations for staff behaviour at Jack Hulland. Staff have and continue to receive training in developmentally responsive and safe ways to work with students and manage student behaviours.
- We will continue to work with the school administration and school council on staff supports and initiatives.

#### **Communications:**

- We will continue to communicate information as it becomes available and where we are able to.
- We continue to remind and encourage families and staff of the resource supports available to them, including a dedicated support person that is available to help families navigate the information and supports available to them.

#### **Child and Youth Advocate Office:**

- We are working with the Child and Youth Advocate on a case-by-case basis to directly support past and present students and families of Jack Hulland School.
- We will continue to provide updates to the Child and Youth Advocate on the government's ongoing response.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- A communication was sent out on behalf of the RCMP in January 2023 advising that the investigation is on-going with the next public update scheduled to go out by the end of April 2023.
- A statement of claim was filed on October 31, 2022, naming the Yukon government and JHES School Council as defendants.

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around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion**Education

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**Background:**

- In November 2021 the Area Superintendent received information from the acting school principal that there could be school-wide physical abuse of students through inappropriate use of holds and isolation rooms as a means to restrain and address student behaviour.
- Violence at the school has previously been described as student-to-student and/or student-to-teacher and largely focused on a Shared Resource Program that supports student with behavioural needs (Grove Street program).
- RCMP and Family and Children's Services were engaged on November 19, 2021, and the investigation is progressing. Production orders for records were completed to RCMP's satisfaction.
- A law group was engaged to conduct the employer's fact-finding investigation using duplicate copies of all the same materials that were disclosed to the RCMP, including Workplace Risk Assessments and other reports involving the use of holds and isolation rooms produced over the last 5 years. A Workplace Risk Assessment is required to be completed and submitted to the Student Support Services Unit when students demonstrate escalated behavior that may be harmful to others.
- The initial findings from the law group received in April 2022, suggested concerns that holds, restraints and seclusion were not used as a last resort or in situations of imminent danger, but rather for matters of non-compliance or not following the direction of staff.
- As the employer, we have an obligation to learn more and will do so.
- Education provides Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training – an industry standard training – to school staff to provide them with the tools to de-escalate situations and protect themselves and others from student outbursts.
- On February 23 and 24, 2022, the Minister approved a request from the school council to make school calendar adjustments in order to suspended classroom instruction for two days, to allow for Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NCI) training for school-based staff.
  - This training was a priority request of the administration, school council and school community.
  - The safety of students and staff is always our first priority, and the training was in response to concerns raised about the safety of staff and students.



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- Earlier training scheduled on a non-instructional day was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- It was imperative to adjust the school calendar to offer the training when the contractor was allowed to travel.
- Section 46 of the Education Act requires that the Minister shall establish the hours of classroom instruction annually by March 31st. Ministerial Order 2022/15 enabled the Minister of Education to adjust hours of instruction to respond to community and school outbreaks of COVID-19.
- Over the two days of training, families and students requiring learning supports or who needed their child to attend school during these days were accommodated in-person.
- Completion of the NCI training resulted in staff having been provided with the knowledge and expectations for managing elevated student behaviours.
- The Child and Youth Advocate on Nov 23, 2021 indicated intent to conduct a systemic review of the use of holds and isolation at Jack Hulland. In subsequent conversations the Advocate had indicated that their preference at the time was regular updates on Department of Education's response through monthly meetings with the ADM of Schools.
- On March 30, 2022, in advance of a scheduled coordination meeting to discuss supports and communication, the CYAO issued a news release expressing "inadequate government action" in regard to the investigation.
- At the April 1, 2022 Interagency meeting, the CYAO agreed to a follow up meeting with Victims Services, H&SS, and Education to discuss the supports for the 7 children for whom they have been providing advocacy. No date was set for this meeting.
- On April 4, 2022, a letter from ADM Sikkes was sent to JHES families confirming the investigations were progressing, follow up actions at the school, and outlining the supports and contacts to discuss appropriate supports was emailed.
  - Follow up actions included the NCI training for all staff, additional VP support, Associate Superintendent assignment, and School Council work on handbook
  - Supports were:
    - School based – contact Principal
    - Child, Youth, and Family Treatment Team
    - Mental Wellness and Substance User Services
    - Victim Services

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Jack Hulland – Grove Street Concerns and Investigation  
around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion** Education

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- CYAO and Student Support Services contacts were also provided to assist parents/guardians in navigating supports.
- Schools branch officials and school administration continue to work with the CYAO on a case-by-case basis to support past and present students and families directly.
- In May 2022, the Deputy Minister of Education provided staff at Jack Hulland Elementary School with a letter clarifying the employer's expectations of Educators in respect to managing student behavior.
- On May 5, 2022, information was also shared with families, and a meeting was held with participation from Victim Services, Family and Children's Services, Family Resource Unit, and Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services.
- On October 24, 2022, the RCMP issued a letter to families indicating the status of their investigations and again asked families to share any reports. Information about supports available to families was included with this letter.
- A statement of claim was filed on October 31, 2022, to the Yukon Supreme Court by two plaintiffs and their guardians against the Department of Education and Jack Hulland Elementary School Council for holds and involuntary seclusion by school staff.
- The lawsuit seeks to be certified as a class-action on behalf of all students "who were subject to holds and restraints and who were locked in a room and/or placed in seclusion" at the school between Jan. 1, 2002, and June 30, 2022.
- On January 23, 2023, Yukon Education sent out a communication on behalf of the RCMP to Jack Hulland Elementary School parents, advising that the investigation is on-going and the next public update is scheduled to go out by the end of April 2023.
- Legal counsel for the Department of Education has filed a defence to the class action lawsuit that was submitted in mid-February 2023.
- A team of leads from EDU, HSS, JUS and PSC will continue to lead the Government of Yukon response at the school and next steps.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****3/20/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and  
Education Act Amendment Implementation** Education

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**Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response:**

- All students and staff in Yukon public schools have the right to feel safe and included.
- They also have the right to be treated with respect and dignity regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, place of origin, ethnicity, citizenship, religion, age or ability.
- School authorities work with their entire school community to develop and implement proactive strategies that support the inclusion, respect and dignity of 2SLGBTQIA+ students and their families.

**Action plan:**

- To further support 2SLGBTQIA+ students, the Department of Education will review and update its Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Policy, as outlined in LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan.
- In our work to implement and evaluate the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, or SOGI, Policy we will continue to partner with students, educators and other members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.
- Schools may develop school-based procedures and strategies under the umbrella of the Department of Education's SOGI Policy, to ensure that 2SLGBTQIA+ students are treated with respect and dignity at all Yukon public schools, which includes publicly funded Catholic schools.

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**LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and  
Education Act Amendment Implementation**

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- As part of our SOGI policy review, we will look at the best ways to support schools to implement the policy in schools.
- As Minister of Education and Women and Gender Equity Directorate, I am fully committed to implementing the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan.

**Education Act Amendments:**

- In Spring 2022, the Government of Yukon was pleased to support amendments to the Education Act to promote equity and non-discrimination and to ensure that all Yukon schools have safe spaces for 2SLGBTQIA+ students in the form of activities or organizations.
- At the beginning of the current school year all school counsellors were provided with information on the Education Act amendments, as well as copies of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Safe and Caring Schools policies.
- School administrators were provided with information about their legislative responsibilities, as well as reference materials and resources.
- Counsellors and administrators were also provided with local and national SOGI and Gender and Sexuality Alliance information.
- Several Yukon schools have Gender and Sexuality Alliances and other 2SLGBTQIA+ initiatives.
- We will continue to encourage and support schools to meet their legal obligations to support 2SLGBTQIA+ students.

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and Education Act Amendment Implementation**

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#### **Additional response—Christopher West:**

- The Department of Education did not, nor will we, invite and endorse Christopher West to speak to Yukon educators, at any school or professional development event.
- We do not support speakers for professional learning whose ideologies and positions do not uphold the principles in:
  - the *Education Act*;
  - the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy;
  - the Safe and Caring Schools Policy; and
  - the *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Protection Act*, which bans conversion therapy.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The media has reported on Porter Creek GSA's concerns as outlined in their letter from October 11, 2022 which calls on government to immediately: 1. implement a modernized SOGI policy in Yukon Schools. 2. ensure that the provisions of Bill No. 304 are being adhered to in all Yukon Schools. 3. ensure that Christopher West is not permitted to speak to Yukon Educators. 4. provide 2SLGBTQIA+ Cultural training to Yukon Educators.

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#### **Background:**

##### Christopher West

- In October 2022, Schools and Student Service Branch heard from a school principal regarding concerns that the Catholic Diocese of the Yukon allegedly put Christopher West's name forward for discussion for professional development session(s) in May 2023.
- On October 13, 2022, the Catholic Episcopal Corporation emailed the department, indicating that "There was no decision made to invite Mr. West and he was

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neither contacted nor booked by the Catholic Episcopal Corporation to speak at any event.”

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan and SOGI Policy

- Yukon schools have a number of universal, stand-alone washrooms available, and we are working to ensure that all school facilities have stand-alone or gender-neutral washrooms. Building standards have now been updated to ensure new schools will include gender inclusive washrooms.
- In the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, released in July 2021, the Department of Education made a number of commitments, including to update the ‘Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy’ within one year.
- The updates are intended to address policy issues such as use of a student’s correct gender pronouns, update terminology to be trans-inclusive, address gender-identity inclusion in sports, and clarify points of contact and responsibilities at the department and school levels.
- On March 23, 2022, the opposition asked the Minister to commit to engaging with the school community to update the SOGI policy before the end of the current school year (June 2022).

Education Act

- Amendments to the *Education Act* make it a legal requirement for Principals to ensure that initiatives and activities in schools are inclusive of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation.
- Education has not normally kept track of school-based strategies that support such initiatives, and an assessment is underway.
- The funding agreement for Catholic schools in Yukon accommodates religious instruction, but emphasizes that they are publicly supported schools with the same responsibilities as other schools, including following responsibilities outlined under SOGI Policy.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****04/19/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Safer School Disclosures**Education

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**Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response:**

- All Yukoners have a legal duty to report suspected abuse, harm or unlawful behavior against children.
- The Student Protection Policy applies to all schools and outlines expectations for documenting, reporting and communicating when allegations or reports of inappropriate behavior or abuse are made.
- School administration and teaching staff have been trained on the policy and its supporting materials which include the Post-Incident Communications Guidance that outlines expectations for ongoing communication with families in various scenarios.
- All allegations or reports of harm are taken seriously. Disclosures are referred to Family and Children's Services or the RCMP so they can investigate incidents as per their respective mandates.
- When allegations or reports of harm are made, we support students, families and staff through the process in a way that protects individuals' privacy.
- We also ensure access to supports and resources.

**Additional response—Disclosures:**

- As a result of training staff on the new Student Protection Policy, there has been an increase in awareness and understanding of what

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### Safer School Disclosures

Education

child abuse, harm or unlawful behavior is, and the legal duty of all Yukoners to report suspected incidents.

- We are now seeing disclosures reported, some historic.
- We have and will continue to handle all disclosures following the Student Protection Policy and procedures.
- The increase in disclosures is a good indication the policy is providing the guidance needed, and that people are learning and using the new policy and its procedures as intended.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The school community will be interested to hear about implementation of the Student Protection Policy and procedures.

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#### Background:

- In September 2022, Education staff finalized the Student Protection Policy, version 1, along with associated procedures.
- All administrators, teachers and EAs were trained in the requirements of the policy.
- This includes reporting inappropriate or concerning behaviour to the administrator, or if the administrator is the subject of the report, to the superintendent.
- Education officials are in the process of seeking feedback from staff and education partners on the implementation of the policy and procedures and how they, and their roll-out, can be improved.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2/27/2023

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy  
Education**

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**Value:**

- Effective teachers are one of the most important factors in a student's success at school and we work to attract and retain the best educators.

**Recommended response—recruitment efforts:**

- The ongoing national labour shortages, the housing shortage and the pandemic have continued to have impacts on our overall recruitment efforts.
- For the 2023-24 school year, we have taken action on recruitment factors that are in our control.
  - We posted positions earlier to be more competitive with other jurisdictions.
  - We have participated in online career fairs, and the Yukon University fair, and placed advertising on LinkedIn, Facebook, Google, YouTube, and through Canadian universities.
  - To date, teacher recruitment has attended 6 online job fairs and 12 in-person education career fairs in the Yukon, Ontario, Alberta, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, and New Brunswick.
  - These steps have supported our recruitment efforts.
- We continue to work to find staff with the best combination of qualifications, experience and suitability.
- In terms of recruitment for the 23/24 school year, postings as of April 26, 2023, include:
  - 30 Teacher postings (18 Whitehorse, 12 Rural);
  - 0 Yukon First Nations Language Teacher postings (0 Whitehorse, 0 Rural);

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**School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy  
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- 4 Principal and Vice Principal postings (2 Whitehorse, 2 Rural); and
  - 7 Education Assistant postings (7 Whitehorse, 0 Rural).
- We began posting for rural schools, French Immersion, and French Schools for the 2023/24 school year in February 2023. External posting began after our internal process in April 2023 and many positions have been filled.
- The new CASA agreement commits the Yukon government to allocate an additional \$1 million in each of the next three budgets to enhance recruitment and retention of new rural education professionals across the Yukon. We have reached out to the Yukon Association of Education Professionals about this, and will work to implement this in the near term.
- As per the CASA, we will also provide a one-year training plan program for Educational Assistants and Teachers on Call by 2024 in collaboration and consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon, and Autism Yukon.

**Additional response—temporary vacancy management:**

- Operational management of schools routinely requires regular adjustment by Administrators, and I commend our Administration teams for their ability to effectively make adjustments where temporary vacancies have put increased demands on staff resources.
- Schools have several options available to help them manage should they have a need. These include, but are not limited to:

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**Spring Session 2023**

**School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy  
Education**

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- Temporarily adjusting staff teaching assignments;
  - Adjustments to student learning groups; and
  - The use of Teachers on Call.
- If a school indicates it may be unable to operate due to a shortage of staff, temporary redeployment of central administration staff to schools or regrouping students will be considered before a shift to remote learning. School closure is a last resort.

**Additional response—psychological wellbeing:**

- The Government of Yukon offers a variety of supports for staff to address workplace challenges, including:
  - Health, Safety and Wellbeing resources to assess, protect and promote psychological safety in the workplace;
  - Our Employee and Family Assistance Program to assist staff on an individual level; and
  - The Respectful Workplace Office is another avenue for staff who are experiencing conflict in the workplace to receive support and guidance.

**Additional response—TOCs:**

- Teachers on Call, or TOCs, are valued. They play a key role in supporting schools through routine short term absences and illness.
- TOCs are recruited on an ongoing basis, and are included in the Yukon Association of Educational Professionals bargaining unit.
- As of April 26, 2023 registered TOC numbers are steady, with 265 registered in the Yukon (205 Whitehorse, 60 Rural), with an additional 18 applications pending (17 Whitehorse, 1 Rural).

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy  
Education**

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Teacher and principal vacancies for the start of the 2022-23 school year were topics in the media, and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals has expressed concerns.
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**Background:**

- TOCs fill in as needed when staff are absent from work for a short periods of time. TOCs come from a range of educational backgrounds. They became part of the Yukon Teacher's Association in 2018, and their rate of pay is subject to negotiation in collective bargaining.
- Similar to other jurisdictions across Canada, we have challenges in hiring qualified teachers.
- We do not have rules preventing staff with jobs in one school from applying for other vacancies in the summer, which can result in a “domino effect” of postings. This also affects TOC availability, as some TOCs are successful in competing on vacant positions and are subsequently removed from the TOC list.
- TOCs have been sent from Whitehorse to our communities throughout the 22-23 year to support school needs.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**4/27/2023**

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care**

Education

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**Value:**

- The Department of Education works collaboratively to provide services and supports to Yukon children and families.

**Recommended response:**

- The Teen Parent Centre brings together a variety of supports for students during and after pregnancy, including providing a safe and caring environment, access to healthy meals, academic support and onsite child care.
- I am pleased to welcome the TPC Child Care Society, the new society that was licensed on January 31, 2023, to start operating the on-site child care program.
- We supported the new society in navigating the licensing process and we will continue to support them as they move forward.
- I want to thank the Teen Parent Access to Education Society for operating the child care centre until the new society was licensed. We acknowledge their many years of important work and dedication to supporting student parents as they further their education.

**Additional response:**

- There are no plans to close the Teen Parent Centre and the support available to students and their children has not changed.
- Across the Yukon, the Teen Parent Grant provides funding for free child care for high school students who are also parents.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care****Education**

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- In December 2022, the TPC Child Care Society was formed with the intention of taking over operation of the onsite early learning and child care program.
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**Background:**New operator: on-site child care

- The TPC Child Care Society was issued a license on January 31, 2023 to operate the early learning and child care program at the Teen Parent Centre.
- The department's ELCC unit supported the new society in that process and had regular meetings and other communication to answer questions and support them moving forward.
- Additionally, the Department is supporting the new society with a transfer payment agreement and a license agreement for use of the space.
- Two board members (out of 7) have recently resigned from the society stating concerns about the direction of the new society.
- On April 17, 2023, the educator in the program (she is also one of the board members who resigned) notified ELCC she was resigning from her employment leaving the program without an educator. As a result of the resignation, the program will have to close temporarily until they can recruit staff. The society was already in the process of interviewing staff for the program.
- ELCC is making arrangements for the children and families in the program to be accommodated elsewhere until the new staff can start.
- ELCC is in regular contact with the new society.

Previous operator: on-site child care

- The Teen Parent Access to Education Society (TPAES) was licensed to operate the onsite child care centre until January 31, 2023.
- They were not active in managing the daycare and the responsibility for the daycare's operation and employees was left to a Department of Education employee.
- TPAES was not in good standing with the Societies Act and as a result, the Yukon government could not provide funding to it. They had not filed the necessary paperwork with Corporate Registry for 2019-20, 2020-21 or 2021-22.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care****Education**

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- TPAES was given an order on September 12, 2022, to resume management of the daycare or surrender their licence. The order deadline was extended to January 31, 2023, to allow time to explore options for next steps.
- While the society did not regain good standing, they did take responsibility for the operation of the child care centre in October 2022.
- In 2021-22, TPAES's representative signed a transfer payment agreement for the total amount of \$180,989. Of that amount, \$133,000 in funding was advanced before it became known that they were no longer in good standing. They were not provided any funding for 2022-23.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****4/19/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project** Education

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**Whitehorse School Replacements Long-Term Capital Planning: refer to TAB SO15**

**Value:**

- Our government is investing in school infrastructure.
- École Whitehorse Elementary School has been identified for replacement with a new, modern facility that will meet the needs of the community for years to come.

**Recommended response:**

- École Whitehorse Elementary School was originally built in the 1950s and is the top priority for replacement among Whitehorse schools.
- The current facility is not able to meet current and future programming and community needs, including access to spaces for innovative, inclusive, and experiential learning.
- The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is a central location that can accommodate French Immersion students from around Whitehorse.
- The Department of Education has established a Project Advisory Committee to facilitate collaboration and the exchange of ideas between key partners, stakeholders and the Government of Yukon. This group meets regularly.
- Project timelines will be determined as further planning work is undertaken.
- Moving Whitehorse Elementary School to the Takhini Educational Land Reserve does not preclude having a downtown school in future.
- There are a number of schools in the downtown right now – the Wood Street Centre, the Individual Learning Centre, the Aurora Virtual



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project**

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School. All operate out of downtown and are an important part of our portfolio of schools.

**Additional response:**

- The government has Educational Land Reserves identified for schools.
- The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is a large parcel of land, serviced, appropriately zoned and provides a central location that has better access to green space desired for modern learning.
- An initial step in this work is to identify potential locations for the future school on the Takhini educational reserve, at which point engagement with the First Nation School Board and Softball Yukon will occur.
- Engagement with the broader Whitehorse community and partners will inform the long-term plan for replacing and renovating aging Whitehorse schools.
- The public can participate in this engagement by completing the online survey between Tuesday, March 14 to Monday, May 15, 2023, or by attending any of the public open houses in Whitehorse throughout April. A link to the survey and details for the open houses can be found at [Yukon.ca/engagements](https://Yukon.ca/engagements).
- In October 2022, I met with downtown residents who are concerned about having an elementary school in the downtown core. This information will feed into the spring engagement, and will be considered as the long-term plan is developed.
- The Project Advisory Committee has designated seats for the following:
  - Whitehorse Elementary School Council

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project** Education

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- Whitehorse Elementary School Administration
- City of Whitehorse
- Government of Yukon
- Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
- Kwanlin Dün First Nation

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- MLAs have been vocal about the need to keep a school in the downtown core. The Minister met with concerned downtown residents on October 21, 2022.
  - Softball Yukon is concerned about impact to ball diamonds located on the Tahkini education reserve.
- 

#### **Background:**

- École Whitehorse Elementary School was originally built in the 1950s and is the oldest currently operated school in the Yukon.
  - Renovating or replacing the current facility on site are not viable options.
  - There have been issues raised with the current École Whitehorse Elementary School regarding the capacity of the gymnasium and its egress, the number of washrooms available on the main floor, IT infrastructure, energy efficiency, lack of modern learning spaces, seismic rating, needed build code upgrades and overall accessibility.
  - Among other concerns such as lot size and suitability, building on the same downtown site would require costly and prohibitive decanting strategies (moving students) for 2-3 years minimum to accommodate build.
  - The Project Advisory Committee meetings have occurred on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, November 10<sup>th</sup>, and December 9<sup>th</sup> 2022, and on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
  - The Project Advisory Committee will provide the department with input on key aspects of the school's planning and design, including ways the school can help to meet community needs in terms of functionality, cultural components, and community space.
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**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project**

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- The School Community, Takhini area residents, Association franco-yukonnaise, Canadian Parents for French, other relevant organizations and the general public will be encouraged to provide feedback on the project at key milestones in the project's design.
- Site selection on Takhini Education Reserve.
  - The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is one of the largest in Whitehorse and has enough room for two schools.
  - There are not a lot of other sites that are centrally located and would meet the needs of a new school; there is not a lot of vacant land in general that is centrally located.
  - To look at a different site would entail having to go through lengthy territorial and municipal zoning processes, followed by those sites needing to be serviced (sewer, electricity etc.); this is not a viable option given the urgent need to replace school infrastructure.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****03/16/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-term capital planning**

Education

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**Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project: refer to TAB SO14**

**Value:**

- Our government is investing in Yukoners by investing in school infrastructure.

**Recommended response:**

- It's important that we ensure the portfolio of schools meets the demands of our growing population and provides modern learning environments for students to learn and grow for years to come.
- The Yukon government recognizes the fundamental role of schools in healthy, thriving communities.
- We want to hear from the public and school communities to better understand their user experiences with their school facilities and how to better meet the K-12 programming needs. The ongoing public engagement will inform the long-term plan for replacing and renovating aging Whitehorse schools.
- The public can participate in this engagement by completing the online survey between Tuesday, March 14 to Monday, May 15, 2023, or by attending any of the public open houses in Whitehorse throughout April. A link to the survey and details for the open houses can be found at [Yukon.ca/engagements](https://Yukon.ca/engagements).
- In addition to the survey and open houses, the department will be hosting focus groups for educators, learning stewards, and students.

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-term capital planning** Education

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- The department is reaching out to school councils to arrange a meeting between council and the public engagement specialist to share information about the public engagement.
- We recognize that there are many other educational partners, organizations, and community groups that have ideas and experiences to share. The department is reaching out to these groups to inform them of the engagement and how to participate, including:
  - Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees
  - Catholic Education Association of Yukon
  - Gadzoosdaa Advisory Committee
  - Yukon First Nation Education Directorate
  - Yukon Association of Education Professionals
  - Yukon Employee's Union
  - Yukon University
  - City of Whitehorse
  - Child Youth and Advocate Office
  - Softball Yukon
  - Association franco-yukonnaise
  - LDay Centre for Learning
  - Autism Yukon
  - Child Development Centre
  - Yukon Literacy Coalition
  - Yukon Learn
  - Whitehorse Downtown Resident's Association
  - Whitehorse-area community associations

**Additional response:**

- We will continue working closely with the two Yukon school boards, the First Nation School Board and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, on their vision for education and capital needs.
- As part of the engagement, we will also be having conversations with Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.
- The department is sharing information about this engagement with First Nations across the territory, and the Gadzoosdaa Advisory

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-term capital planning**

Education

Committee, recognizing that students from communities may attend school in Whitehorse.

- We continue to invest in all our schools across the territory and conversations about capital projects in rural schools will continue at the community level.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The public engagement was publicly communicated to start in the fall of 2022.

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#### **Background:**

- The purpose of the engagement is to:
  - Build relationships with school communities;
  - Inform Yukoners about the school capital planning and development process; and
  - Collect stakeholder feedback on their ideas and considerations for a 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment.
- The results of this engagement will inform future development of an updated Whitehorse school replacement plan, and a work plan for small and medium renovations for Whitehorse schools.
- The public engagement was delayed from fall 2022 to spring 2023 as more time was required to secure a local contractor.
- École Emilie-Tremblay was the last elementary school built in Whitehorse and opened in 1996.
- The Whistle Bend Elementary School will be completed during the 2023-24 school year.
- The French First Language Secondary School Community Centre, Centre scolaire secondaire communautaire Paul-Émile Mercier (CSSC Mercier) opened its doors to students in November 2020.

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-term capital planning**

Education

- Short-term measures such as portables have been added to several Whitehorse schools to alleviate enrolment pressures.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

3/20/2023

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Yukon First Nation School Board****Education**

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**School Board Elections and Referendums: refer to TAB EP03****School Governance and Associations: refer to TAB EP04****Value:**

- The Government of Yukon, Chiefs Committee on Education and the First Nation School Board share the common goal of providing high quality and culturally appropriate education, based on an Indigenous worldview, for all Yukon students.

**Recommended response:**

- The First Nation School Board governs eight schools across the Yukon. This is a historic step for Yukon First Nations and their citizens.
- The First Nation School Board is enabling Yukon First Nations to reclaim greater responsibility for the administration and management of education programs for students in their communities.
- I would like to acknowledge and thank the Chiefs Committee on Education, the Interim Governance Committee, the officials of the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and the First Nation School Board, who worked tirelessly to launch the school board in February 2022, and to ensure a successful start to the 2022-23 school year for schools and students moving to the school board.
- As Minister of Education, I will continue to collaborate with the Chiefs Committee on Education and the First Nation School Board trustees as I exercise my oversight authorities.
- I will also continue to work on a government-to-government basis with individual First Nations on their educational priorities for their citizens.



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Yukon First Nation School Board****Education**

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**Additional response:**

- In February, four schools held referendums to join the First Nation School Board. Thank you to all school communities, councils, the First Nation School Board, and Elections Yukon for providing opportunities and holding conversations on the considerations to join the First Nation School Board. I am pleased to announce that the following three schools will be managed and operated by the First Nation School Board as of the start of the 2023-24 school year:
  - Eliza Van Bibber School, Pelly Crossing
  - Ghùch Tlâ Community School, Carcross
  - Kluane Lake School, Destruction Bay
- Other school communities that seek to join the First Nation School Board will have opportunities to do so in the future.
- The department meets regularly with officials of the First Nation School Board regarding supports and plans that go into operating schools.

**Additional response - Funding:**

- I am proud of our over \$35 million dollar agreement with the First Nation School Board.
- This significant 15-month agreement, runs until the end of the 2023-24 school year.
- The agreement supports the operations and maintenance of First Nation School Board schools, the organizational capacity of the board and the development of Yukon First Nation language and cultural educational programs that will benefit all schools operated by the Department of Education.
- This agreement is based on the same funding components and drivers as CSFY, with some differences for the uniqueness of the FNSB.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Yukon First Nation School Board****Education**

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- Items such as remoteness, additional governance and administration requirements related to the number of schools, community committees and travel are unique to the FNSB.
- The FNSB has also been provided with discretionary funding in the amount of \$2.5M for student outcomes and Indigenization of the curriculum.
- The Department worked collaboratively with the FNSB to ensure they are set up for success, to address recommendations from the 2019 Auditor General's report and to advance priorities in the Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP)
- It is important to note that the JEAP is a tri-lateral agreement between Yukon Government, Yukon First Nations and Government of Canada – we are engaging with our partners as we continue this work.
- Resources are provided to school authorities to provide consistent service levels in the provisioning of K-12 education programs across Yukon, while also recognizing unique language and culture considerations.
- We also had an Interim Funding agreement in place to ensure a successful transition for the 2022-23 school year for \$13,094,188 that ended on March 31, 2023.
- This Interim Funding agreement represented base funding for school operations as well as funding for the new board's administration and costs associated with Indigenous recognition.
- Funding requirements for existing school-based budgets and administration may change as more schools join the First Nation School Board.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

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**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Yukon First Nation School Board****Education**

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- There will be considerable interest in how the First Nation School Board is operating the eight schools under its authority, and the impacts of this on all Yukon students.
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**Background:**

- The First Nation School Board held its first election November 2022, and now has 5 elected trustees: Shadelle Chambers, Erin Pauls, Dana Tizya-Tram, Jocelyn Joe-Strack and Gillian Staveley.
  - The following school communities voted in 2022 to have their school councils dissolved and replaced by the First Nation School Board (FNSB):
    - St. Elias Community School (Haines Junction);
    - Johnson Elementary and Watson Lake Secondary Schools (Watson Lake);
    - Ross River School;
    - Chief Zzeh Gittlit School (Old Crow);
    - Grey Mountain Primary and Takhini Elementary Schools (Whitehorse); and
    - Nelnah Bessie John School (Beaver Creek).
  - JV Clark School (Mayo) electors voted in 2022 to not have their school operated by the FNSB.
  - An Interim Funding agreement was in place to ensure a successful transition for the start of the 2022-23 school year. The total amount of this agreement was \$13,094,188 (to March 31, 2023) and represents base funding for school operations as well as funding for the new board's administration and costs associated with Indigenous recognition.
  - The interim funding agreement was found from within the Department's existing budget.
  - The department worked with the newly elected trustees on a final financial arrangement for the FNSB funding formula to create equitable funding between the school authorities and to establish consistent service levels in the provisioning of K-12 education programs.
  - We have a 15-month agreement that runs until June 30, 2024, in an amount of just over \$35 million which includes a combination of new money and reprofiling the existing budget to offset the funding requirements of the First Nation School Board.
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**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Yukon First Nation School Board****Education**

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- The Government has committed to this funding, through a Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) The breakdown is as follows:
  - Operational support and Operations and Maintenance of 8 schools \$23.6M (same cost factors and drivers as CSFY with a minor difference for rural remoteness)
  - Board Governance and Administration of 8 schools for the period \$3.2M (same cost factors and drivers as CSFY with and additional amount to address requirements due to number of schools, travel requirements, remoteness and community committees)
  - Discretionary Grant: Indigenous recognition \$4.8M (calculated same as CSFY)
  - Discretionary Grant: One time funding for Governance of Community committees \$450k
  - Discretionary Grant: for student outcomes and indigenization of the curriculum in response to the 2019 Auditors General report \$3.125M
- Previous decisions of the interim committee will need to be confirmed by the trustees.
- All school staff continue to be Yukon government employees. They will retain membership in their union or bargaining association.
- An appointed Interim Governance Committee led the First Nation School Board through its first nine months of work from February 2022 to the school board trustee election in November 2022.
- The Interim Governance Committee was appointed from recommendations made by the Chiefs Committee on Education, and included: Dr. Alyce Johnson, Erin Pauls, Jocelyn Joe-Strack, Mark Wedge, Melanie Bennett, and Kirk Cameron.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****04/05/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Student to Student Harm in Schools****Education**

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**Value:**

- The health, safety and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response:**

- There is a need to proactively and responsively address concerns of student-to-student harm.
- There is a clear expectation that all members of the school community must not engage in bullying, abusive or other unacceptable behaviors, as outlined in our Safe and Caring Schools Policy.
- Peer-to-peer harm is taken very seriously, and we commit to examining the need for a stand-alone policy to address this issue.
- If a serious incident occurs at school, we follow emergency plans and response protocols. This includes working with the RCMP and other agencies as well as providing support to families involved.
- We have developed communication guidance to support school administrators in providing clear and consistent communication to families.

**Additional response:**

- School staff promote respectful and positive behaviours by providing welcoming and positive spaces for teaching and learning.
- Few children come to school intending to be disruptive – it is up to the adults in the school to be sensitive to the signs that a student may become dysregulated and demonstrate escalated behaviours.
- Staff use Violence and Threat Risk Assessment training to recognize signs and respond appropriately.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Student to Student Harm in Schools**Education

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**Resources and Supports:**

- We are focusing on training and onboarding to:
    - support staff in building connection with students;
    - identify risks, signs of trauma, unhealthy social and bullying behaviours; and
    - respond with effective supports and redirecting behaviours.
  - We share resources with staff and students and families about restorative practices to strengthen school communities.
- 

**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Dysregulated behavior, violence and threats occurring in schools is an issue of concern.
- 

**Background:**

The Department of Education promotes respectful and safe school environments in the following ways:

- Working closely with government and non-government partners to promote safe schools and response to concerns of safety;
- Safe and Caring Schools Policy;
- Student Protection Policy;
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy;
- Non-violent Crises Intervention training; and
- Available cyberbullying resources and presentations with guest speakers.

Training and supports for staff

- The department supports school staff after incidents through: consultation with School Community Consultant; Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP, or short term counseling); and support and collaboration from the RCMP and other medical and other government and non-government agencies.
  - The department has a Safe and Caring Schools Support Plan that outlines the training offered to school staff to support them.
-

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Student to Student Harm in Schools****Education**

- Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training is an example of effective industry-standard training that is widely available to school-based staff to prevent and respond to students who are demonstrating escalated behaviours.
- Training in the Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol (VTRA) is offered by Department of Education every two years.
- Training for school VTRA teams was held at the end of March 2021 via virtual means from the North American Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response (NATCAR).
- Through the collective agreement, we work with YAEP at the *Positive Behaviour Intervention Support and Classroom Diversity Committee* to develop these supports for Yukon schools.

Process for dealing with 'incidents of concern'

- The department has a 'Workplace Risk Assessment and Safety Plan Procedure' in place for dealing with incidents that occur which indicate that a student's actions may be a risk to staff or other students.
- Under the procedure, such incidents are first reported to the school principal, who investigates the incident using the 'Workplace Risk Assessment'.
- If it is determined that the incident involved a serious threat such as a threat to harm or kill, the 'Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol' is used to address the incident. This activates the involvement of community partners to deal with the issue, including the RCMP, Student Support Services, and Health and Social Services.
- If the principal determines that there is otherwise a risk of injury to staff or other students then the Workplace Risk Assessment and Safety Plan Procedure is followed and the appropriate plans and resources are put in place to support the school, staff, and students to address and deal with the issue.
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**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****03/07/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Auditor General - 2019 Audit and Public Accounts Committee  
Update****Education**

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**Value:**

- Together with our partners in education, we are reimagining the Yukon school system. We cannot undertake this transformative work without partners and their trust – educators, students and families who are at the heart of our work.

**Recommended response:**

- We are working with our partners and stakeholders to reimagine education and create school environments that are safe, inclusive, and build on student strengths. We are working to ensure that every child feels connected and supported to thrive.
- We are focused on the important work of recovering from the pandemic and responding to the Auditor General of Canada's Review of Kindergarten to Grade 12 education in the Yukon, and the 2021 Review of Inclusive and Special Education.
- Since December 2019 we have maintained student learning during a global pandemic and have made progress on several initiatives to address system inequities, including:
  - Launching the Universal Child Care model;
  - Launching enhanced early kindergarten and full-day kindergarten in rural communities;
  - Working with the Chiefs Committee on Education to establish the First Nation School Board;
  - Finalizing a Collaboration Framework with Yukon First Nations;
  - Completing the Review of Inclusive and Special Education and advancing the Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Auditor General - 2019 Audit and Public Accounts Committee Update**

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Education

workplan developed with Yukon First Nations and education partners;

- Launching the Ready-to-Learn Schools initiative, based on the ground-breaking work of Dr. Bruce Perry's Neurosequential Model;
- Creating a data sharing MOU with Yukon First Nations and releasing publicly available student data reports; and
- Initiating the engagement phase of work to develop a Student Outcomes Strategy, which will look at root causes of poor student outcomes, develop targets and evaluate progress on closing gaps.

**Additional response:**

- We are unwavering in our commitment to implement all of the recommendations contained in the 2019 Auditor General's report.
- We welcomed the opportunity to provide the Standing Committee on Public Accounts an update on our work at the end of February.
- We are taking informed actions that come from our diverse perspectives rather than making unilateral decisions on changes to education.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- On September 26, 2022 the Department was asked to provide an update to the Standing Committee on Public Accounts by the end February 2023.
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**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Auditor General - 2019 Audit and Public Accounts Committee  
Update**

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**Education****Background:**

- Some of our actions since the release of the audit report include:
  - Education agreements with all Yukon First Nations.
  - A student data sharing Memorandum of Understanding and data working group with Yukon First Nations.
  - We provided \$735,000 in 2023-24 in funding to implement the Joint Education Action Plan and related collective education priorities.
  - We also provided:
    - \$1.5 million to support community-level education agreements with the 14 Yukon First Nations;
    - \$2 million to Yukon First Nation organizations to support other education initiatives, including language learning, cultural activities and Elder programming in schools; and
    - \$3.98 million to support language initiatives specifically.
  - Working with Yukon First Nations on a new teacher resource and professional learning tool for Yukon First Nations languages, cultures, histories and ways of knowing, doing and being in all grade levels and subject areas.
  - Implementing a collaboration framework with Yukon First Nations and advancing work on a student outcome strategy.
  - Launching the Ready-to Learn Schools initiative in fall 2022 in schools across the Yukon. This program is based on the ground-breaking work of Dr. Bruce Perry's Neurosequential Model, and supports schools to affect positive social change and well-being for all students and staff. It is based on the understanding that children can only be ready to learn when they feel safe and calm.
  - Working with First Nation governments and other partners to deliver and enhance early learning child care program in the Yukon.
  - With support from the Government of Canada, working with Yukon University to educators assessed as "level 3 equivalent" can complete the requirements for a level 3 certificate and become fully qualified.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Auditor General - 2019 Audit and Public Accounts Committee Update**

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- Working with Yukon First Nations to develop and implement curriculum, resources and training to support localized and culturally inclusive school programming and learning about Yukon First Nations.
- 2019 OAG recommendations:
  - 42: The Department of Education should develop and implement a strategy to improve student outcomes, particularly for Yukon First Nations and rural students, including:
    - analyzing the root causes of poor student outcomes;
    - defining performance targets;
    - actions to reach these targets; and
    - evaluating the effectiveness of these actions.
  - 47: The Department should implement its required oversight mechanisms to provide summary reports to the Minister and complete teacher evaluations.
  - 70: The Department should conduct a full review of its services and supports for inclusive education, including how best to:
    - evaluate its approach to inclusive education;
    - determine effectiveness of services and supports;
    - determine whether sufficient resources are in place to support inclusive education;
    - prioritize students for specialized assessments;
    - assess and track specialist recommendations; and
    - assess and track teachers' use of recommended strategies.
  - 89: The Department should complete and implement its policy to collaborate with Yukon First Nations to meet the Education Act's requirements, and a strategic action plan with specific, measurable actions and timelines.
  - 93: The Department of Education should meet regularly with Yukon First Nations to assess the status of the Joint Education Action Plan's initiatives and determine how and when to complete them.
  - 99: With Yukon First Nations, School Boards, and School Councils, the Department of Education should develop policies and guidelines to support First Nations language learning, including:
    - determining the language goals for individual schools;

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Auditor General - 2019 Audit and Public Accounts Committee  
Update**

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Education

- considering a range of approaches for the specific language, student population density, and community interests; and
- identifying options to support Yukon First Nations languages both during regular school hours and outside of school.
- 109: The Department of Education should determine the human resources and training required to develop sufficient classroom support and materials to help teachers implement the new curriculum as it pertains to Yukon First Nations culture and languages.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**03/01/2023**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **Department of Education Health and Safety Investigation**

Education

**Emergency Procedures and Public Notices: refer to SP03**

**Safer Schools Policies and Procedures: refer to DPT08**

#### **Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

#### **Recommended response:**

- This past year, we have been working closely with the Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Board to determine how our program is working overall and how it could work more effectively.
- The Department of Education met the inspection report timelines for submitting information regarding Joint Health and Safety Committees at Yukon schools and is in compliance with requirements for its workplaces.
- The department has also established a communication process with Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Board for submitting required information for the remainder of the school year.

#### **Additional response:**

- We will continue working with schools to ensure that their Joint Health and Safety Committees have the proper training and resources to function and conduct their important work.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Media has reported on the inspection reports. Schools inconsistently reported and provided documentation such as meeting minutes and worksite inspections.

# Session Briefing Note

**Spring Session 2023**

## Department of Education Health and Safety Investigation

Education

### Background:

- The health and safety requirements for individual workplaces are based on staffing size and these requirements are outlined in the Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Act.
- Where required, all Department of Education worksites have functioning Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSC).
- We will continue as the employer, as per Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Act, to provide training and orientation for health and safety representatives in workplaces with under 20 staff.
- In January 2022 Education received notification that the Yukon Workers' Safety and Compensation Board (YWSCB) was conducting an investigation to determine the current state of Joint Health and Safety Committees (JHSC) in schools.
- Education provided all available documents within the timeframe provided.
- In August 2022, YWHSB published an inspection report that outlined gaps and inconsistencies in the department's health and safety program. The department responded by the requested October 7, 2022 date, and is now in compliance.
- Education has developed a framework to ensure all the necessary training and resources are available, in order to ensure that all worksites are adhering to the *Workers' Safety and Compensation Act*.
  - The framework consists of continuous monthly communication with the schools on upcoming training opportunities.
  - Education is working with PSC to create a new format to deliver training so that training will be more accessible.
- There are 18 schools that require an active JHSC based on number of staff.
- The Education central administration building has a JHSC.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2/3/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Figures at a Glance**

**Education**

**FIGURES AT A GLANCE**

**O&M BUDGET (000's)**

	<b>23-24</b>	<b>22-23</b>
COVID-19 Response	\$0	\$457
Education Support Services Deputy Minister's Office \$1,469 / \$1,362 Communications \$836 / \$709 Human Resources \$3,070 / \$2,063 Finance \$1,585 / \$1,574	\$6,960	\$5,708
School Authorities K-12 \$113,280 (includes FNSB) / \$108,118 Commission Scolaire Francophone du Yukon \$9,968 / \$9,709	\$123,248	\$117,827
Administration & Support Administration \$323 / \$323 Student Support Services \$3,021 / \$3,580 Technology & Student Information \$1,856 / \$1,866 Facilities and Transportation \$8,251 / \$8,299	\$13,451	\$14,068
Policy & Partnerships Administration \$486 / \$441 Strategic Support \$3,674 / \$3,513 Curriculum & Assessment \$3,714 / \$3,388 French Programs \$1,571 / \$1,570 Training Programs \$10,684 / \$10,698 Early Learning and Child Care \$43,443 / \$40,079	\$63,572	\$59,689
First Nations Initiatives Administration \$350 / \$323 First Nations Program Delivery and Curriculum Development \$916 / \$1,022 First Nations Language Initiatives \$2,784 / \$3,024 First Nations Education Agreements \$3,581 / \$3,521	\$7,631	\$7,890
Yukon University	\$29,293	\$28,913
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$244,155</b>	<b>\$234,552</b>

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Figures at a Glance**

**Education**

**K-12 Schools**

**2023-2024**

**2022-2023**

*For Budget Purposes Only*

*(estimates)*

1	Teachers	562.00 FTEs (includes all school authorities)	562.00 FTEs (includes all school authorities)
2	Students on IEPs (includes CSFY)	*will update in October 2023	393 at the end of the 2021/22 school year
3	Paraprofessionals (EAs and Remedial Tutors)	Budgeted 251.4 FTE (includes all school authorities)	Budgeted 250.4 FTE (includes all school authorities)
4	Cost per student*	\$19,780	\$19,721

\*Cost per student reflects all the direct operation of operating the schools (including the cost of all school-based staff, materials, supplies, utilities, operating funding for school boards and custodial program for the urban schools). They do not include the support and maintenance activities, which are indirect costs (branch administration, student transportation, in-services training, curriculum development, First Nation language program development, leases, maintenance, security, grounds keeping or student accommodation or any capital costs). The figures are budget estimates and are based on a fiscal year.



**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Figures at a Glance**

Education

**ADULT LEARNERS**

**2022-2023**

**2021- 2022**

**Forecast**

**Actuals**

1	Registered Apprentices (number of persons registered at any point in the calendar year)	575	554
2	Trade Certifications issued	68	54
3	STEP program placements	116	103
4	Summer Career placements	30	21
5	Post-secondary student funding (including Canada Student loans and grants) expenditures (Academic Year - August 1 to July 31)	\$6,900,000	\$6,667,705

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**4/27/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Main Estimates**

Education

**MAINS AT A GLANCE (original budget)**

**2023-2024 O&M BUDGET (000's)**

Education Support Services Deputy Minister's Office \$1,469 Communications \$836 Human Resources \$3,070 Finance \$1,585	\$6,960
School Authorities K-12 \$113,280 Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon \$9,968	\$123,248
Administration & Support Administration \$323 Student Support Services \$3,021 Technology & Student Information \$1,856 Facilities and Transportation \$8,251	\$13,451
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First Nations Initiatives Administration \$350 First Nations Program Delivery and Curriculum Development \$916 First Nations Language Initiatives \$2,784 First Nations Education Agreements \$3,581	\$7,631
Yukon University	\$29,293
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$244,155</b>

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Main Estimates**

**Spring Session 2023**  
Education

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Approved by:

Mary Cameron

27/02/2023

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Privacy Breach**Education

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**Value:**

- The Department of Education takes protecting the privacy of Yukoners' personal information very seriously.

**Recommended response:**

- When the breach was identified, the department followed the Yukon government Privacy Breach Protocols as set out by the government's Access to Information and Protection of Privacy office.
- This included notifying the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner of the breach.
- In its follow-up report, the Privacy Commissioner's Office determined that the risk of significant harm to the individuals affected by this breach has now been mitigated, and that the Department of Education would be taking appropriate action to address the breach.

**Additional response:**

- We have since taken steps to train managers and staff on the protection of privacy, and we are actively reviewing workflow processes and training opportunities to prevent privacy breaches in the future.
- This training includes clarifying that secure file transfer tools, rather than email, must be used for transmitting personal information outside Yukon government's firewall.
- In addition, we are documenting what personal information we collect and how we handle and safeguard that information for all program areas.
- We are also reviewing and updating the department's privacy management policy and plan.

# Session Briefing Note

# Spring Session 2023

## Privacy Breach

## Education

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- On Aug. 24, 2022, a privacy breach occurred at the Department of Education involving the personal information of 537 individuals that had applied for the Yukon Grant.
- There was significant media coverage on this issue.

### Background:

- An Excel spreadsheet containing personal information of 537 individuals (including names, addresses, DOB and SIN) was inadvertently sent from an Education employee to a member of the public on August 24, 2022 by email.
- Prior to notification, the Privacy Officer followed the YG Privacy Breach Protocols as set out by the ATIPP office (document is available online at Yukon.ca). The steps include: contain the breach, submit report to Designated Privacy Officer (DPO), DPO assess report, further assessment and action, determine risk of significant harm, notification, complete DPO breach reporting form, manage DPO reporting form).
- On September 22, 2022, the department was able to connect with the recipient, who confirmed that they had not read or opened the email.
- The recipient of the information cooperated fully and confirmed that they did not see the email, but were able to locate and delete it without opening it. They have also signed a declaration of such.
- On Friday, Sept. 23 an email update was sent to the 537 affected individuals assuring them that the third-party had been located and that they had confirmed in writing that the email and attachments has been deleted.
- All affected individuals were offered the opportunity to enrol in one year of paid credit monitoring.

### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**02/27/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

## **Spring Session 2023**

### **Safer School Disclosures**

Education

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#### **Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

#### **Recommended response:**

- All Yukoners have a legal duty to report suspected abuse, harm or unlawful behavior against children.
- The Student Protection Policy applies to all schools and outlines expectations for documenting, reporting and communicating when allegations or reports of inappropriate behavior or abuse are made.
- School administration and teaching staff have been trained on the policy and its supporting materials which include the Post-Incident Communications Guidance that outlines expectations for ongoing communication with families in various scenarios.
- All allegations or reports of harm are taken seriously. Disclosures are referred to Family and Children's Services or the RCMP so they can investigate incidents as per their respective mandates.
- When allegations or reports of harm are made, we support students, families and staff through the process in a way that protects individuals' privacy.
- We also ensure access to supports and resources.

#### **Additional response—Disclosures:**

- As a result of training staff on the new Student Protection Policy, there has been an increase in awareness and understanding of what

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Safer School Disclosures**

Education

child abuse, harm or unlawful behavior is, and the legal duty of all Yukoners to report suspected incidents.

- We are now seeing disclosures reported, some historic.
- We have and will continue to handle all disclosures following the Student Protection Policy and procedures.
- The increase in disclosures is a good indication the policy is providing the guidance needed, and that people are learning and using the new policy and its procedures as intended.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The school community will be interested to hear about implementation of the Student Protection Policy and procedures.

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**Background:**

- In September 2022, Education staff finalized the Student Protection Policy, version 1, along with associated procedures.
- All administrators, teachers and EAs were trained in the requirements of the policy.
- This includes reporting inappropriate or concerning behaviour to the administrator, or if the administrator is the subject of the report, to the superintendent.
- Education officials are in the process of seeking feedback from staff and education partners on the implementation of the policy and procedures and how they, and their roll-out, can be improved.

**Approved by:**

Mary Cameron

2/27/2023

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

#### Recommended response:

- There is nothing more important than the wellbeing, safety and protection of students when they are in our care, whether that is at Hidden Valley or any school across our entire system.
- Since the Safer Schools Action Plan's release we have dug in, done the work, and are delivering to support students, teachers and families. We are on track to complete all 23 of our commitments in that plan this spring.
- We took meaningful steps to improve government-wide coordination in response to critical incidents so that we ensure timely and appropriate supports for children, their families and the school community.
- We also worked hard to address policy gaps and enhance safety and oversight mechanisms across all departments and with the Royal Canadian Mounted Police.
- Other key advancements since the release of the action plan include training for school-based staff, establishing a Hidden Valley Parent Advisory Committee and developing policies to improve internal coordination and communication as well as prevention and responding to incidents in schools.

#### Additional response:

- We will continue to share public updates on progress.
- The outcomes of this work are extremely important. We are taking action to build back trust and repair and restore confidence in our ability to respond to critical incidents and support school communities.



- A full listing of all actions and their progress status can be found online at [Yukon.ca/safer-schools-action-plan](https://Yukon.ca/safer-schools-action-plan)

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- With the release of the Hidden Valley Elementary School Independent Review Report, expectations are high to deliver on all commitments in the Safer Schools Action Plan by the spring of 2023.
- With additional lawsuits being brought forward and the release of reports from multiple Education reviews, conversations will likely restart about supports for students, staff, and families at Hidden Valley. Amanda Rogers, the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office and the RCMP concluded their work. The Ombudsman's Office has not yet released its report.

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#### **Background:**

- In October 2021, Minister McLean launched an independent review of the 2019 incident at Hidden Valley Elementary School.
- The Government of Yukon and the RCMP acknowledged that mistakes were made in the response to the 2019 incident at Hidden Valley Elementary School. Minister of Education Jeanie McLean and Minister of Justice Tracy-Anne McPhee apologized to parents at Hidden Valley Elementary and acknowledged that steps could have been taken to better inform and support parents following the incident.
- The report of the internal review from Amanda Rogers was delivered on January 31, 2022. The Department and parents/guardians received the report at the same time and Amanda Rogers walked through the report and her recommendations.
- The Yukon government released the Hidden Valley Elementary School Independent Review Report action plan on February 24, 2022.
- In October 2022, the Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Office released its report *Responding to Sexualized Abuse in Yukon Schools: Review of Policies and Governmental Response*. Minister McLean responded to the report's recommendations in writing on November 22, 2022.

# Session Briefing Note

**TAB DPT07**

**Spring 2023**

## Safer Schools Action Plan

Executive Council  
Office

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- The committee overseeing the plan includes deputies from the departments of Education, Justice, Health and Social Services, the Public Service Commission, Women and Gender Equity Directorate, and the Executive Council Office.

**Approved by:**

**Shared by ECO as approved note**

**Feb. 7, 2023**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Safer Schools Policies and Procedures**Education

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**Safer Schools Action Plan: refer to DPT07****Safer School Disclosures: refer to DPT06****Student to Student Harm in Schools: refer to SSS05****Emergency Procedures and Public Notices: refer to SP03****Education Health and Safety Investigation: Refer to DPT02****Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response:**

- All allegations or reports of harm are taken seriously. All Yukoners have a legal duty to report suspected abuse, harm or unlawful behaviour against children.
- We've developed a Student Protection Policy: Preventing and Responding to Harm by Adults, and related procedures and training, in response to Action 6 of the Safer Schools Action Plan.
- This policy outlines our commitment to safeguard students while in the care of adults while engaged in school-related activities.
- The related procedures outline how staff are to fulfill their responsibility to prevent, respond and report alleged or suspected harm or inappropriate behavior by adults in order to foster a safe and caring school climate.
- In addition to safeguarding students from harm from adults, there is a need to proactively and responsively address concerns of student-to-student harm.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Safer Schools Policies and Procedures**Education

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- There is a clear expectation that all members of the school community must not engage in bullying, abusive or other unacceptable behaviors, as outlined in our Safe and Caring Schools Policy.
- Peer-to-peer harm is taken very seriously, and we commit to examining policies and procedures as we strengthen our approaches and responses to safe schools.

**Additional response:**

- If a serious incident occurs at school, we follow emergency plans and response protocols, whether the event involves conduct of an adult, a student or a member of the school community. This includes working with the RCMP and other agencies as well as providing support to families involved.
- As of the end of September, school administration, teachers and educational assistants have been trained on the Student Protection Policy as well as Post-Incident Communications Guidance, which outlines expectations for ongoing communication with families and other school community members in various scenarios.
- To supplement this training, the Department of Education partnered with the Canadian Center for Child Protection to develop a training video that outlines prevention methods, including signs of grooming or abuse.
- We are also working to ensure all school support staff and adults working in school settings, including school councils, are trained.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Safer Schools Policies and Procedures****Education**

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- Work is currently underway to review the Student Protection Policy and Post-Incident Communications Guidance with our education partners, before the end of this school year.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- After the release of the Hidden Valley Elementary School Independent Review Report, expectations are high to deliver on all commitments contained in the Safer Schools Action Plan by the spring of 2023.

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**Background:**Key considerations – communications

- The Yukon School Post-Incident Communications Guidance is clear that for major incidents the Superintendent or Executive Director will notify School Council members or School Board Trustees.
- Examples of major incidents include police or the fire department attending the school, and lock downs or “hold-and-secure”.
- Where there are incidents or allegations of abuse or harm to a student, the Assistant Deputy Minister Schools and Student Services will coordinate with other agencies, including the RCMP and Family and Children’s Services, to consider the approach for communicating with students, families, school boards and councils and school staff, based on:
  - Any ongoing investigation; and
  - An assessment of the rights, privacy legislation and dignity of staff and students.

General

- In October 2021, Minister McLean launched an independent review of the 2019 incident at Hidden Valley Elementary School.
- The Government of Yukon and the RCMP acknowledged that mistakes were made in the response to the 2019 incident at Hidden Valley Elementary School.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Safer Schools Policies and Procedures**

Education

Minister of Education Jeanie McLean and Minister of Justice Tracy-Anne McPhee apologized to parents at Hidden Valley Elementary and acknowledged that steps could have been taken to better inform and support parents following the incident.

- The report of the internal review from Amanda Rogers was delivered on January 31, 2022 and the Department and parents/guardians received the report at the same time as Amanda Rogers walked through the report and her recommendations.
- The Yukon government released the Hidden Valley Elementary School Independent Review Report action plan on February 24, 2022.
- The committee overseeing the action plan response includes Deputy Ministers from the departments of Education, Justice, Health and Social Services, the Public Service Commission, Women and Gender Equity Directorate, and the Executive Council Office.
- The Safer Schools Action Plan was renamed as such at the request of the Hidden Valley school administration. The new name reflects that the policies and changes in this plan will improve safety in all Yukon schools. The investigation resulting from children being harmed while in attendance at a Yukon Public School has produced a set of detailed recommendations that require actions as a response to the findings of an independent review undertaken by the Department of Education in the fall of 2021.
- The Child and Youth Advocate Office released a report on student safety in October 2022.
- The Ombudsman's Office is also investigating the department's response to the events at Hidden Valley Elementary School. A report is forthcoming.

**Approved by:****Kelli Taylor****3/22/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
a/Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**New CASA Agreement - Education commitments**

Education

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**Value:**

- The 2023 Confidence and Supply Agreement sets out a new relationship between the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus, founded on the principle of “good faith and no surprises”, in order to improve the lives of Yukoners.

**Recommended response:**

- The opposition NDP shares the Yukon government’s desire to improve the Yukon’s education system. To this end, the new Confidence and Supply Agreement contains several specific actions for department of Education and identifies funding commitments over the next three budgets.
- These actions include:
  - Support for recruitment and retention of rural education professionals;
  - Increased allocation of education assistants and Learning Assistance Teachers;
  - A service standard of six months from the time of referrals for completed psychoeducational assessments;
  - Provide a 1-year training plan for educational assistants and teachers on call; and
  - Create dedicated wellness counsellors or a similar position.
- Some of this work is already underway under the Re-imagining Inclusive and Special Education initiative.

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **New CASA Agreement - Education commitments**

Education

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#### **Additional response:**

- The Department of Education is reaching out to organizations directly involved in work around these commitments to initiate a broader conversation.
- Letters have been sent out to Autism Yukon, the Learning Disability Association of Yukon, and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals with regard to the commitment to provide a one-year training plan program for Educational Assistants and Teachers on Call.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- On January 31, 2023, the Yukon Liberal Caucus and the Yukon NDP Caucus signed a Confidence and Supply Agreement in which they agreed to advance a number of proposals during the course of the agreement.

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#### **Background:**

- From the agreement: To improve the Yukon's education system, the Government of Yukon will:
  - Allocate an additional \$1 million in each of the next three budgets to enhance recruitment and retention of new rural education professionals across the Yukon. This may include a program aimed at supporting Yukon students pursuing studies in educational fields who commit to working in the Yukon after graduation.
  - Increase the allocation of Educational Assistants and Learning Assistance Teachers starting in the fall of 2023.
  - Provide a one-year training plan program for Educational Assistants and Teachers on Call by 2024 in collaboration and consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon, and Autism Yukon.



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****New CASA Agreement - Education commitments**

Education

- Provide, complete, and deliver the final report for psychoeducational assessments necessary to obtain an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) within six months of referrals from teachers, administrators or physicians. If the Government is unable to provide the assessment directly within this timeframe, it shall cover expenses incurred by parents to obtain the assessment externally.
- Provide all students in need of special education with the option of an IEP.
- Create dedicated wellness counsellors or similar positions in all schools specifically dedicated to addressing the need for comprehensive mental health and wellness.
- Commit to an additional annual investment of \$1 million for mental health outcomes for youth.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****3/1/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Comprehensive Mental Health Approach (RISE)**

Education

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**Mental Health Supports for School Staff and Students: refer to TAB SSS04**

**Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response—Mental Health and Wellness Approach:**

- We take the mental wellness of students seriously, particularly as we move forward from the pandemic, and we are continually assessing the needs of students.
- The Department of Education is developing a comprehensive Mental Health and Wellness Approach. This is an important part of the overall work we are doing to reimagine inclusive and special education.
- Our Mental Health and Wellness Approach will include prevention and promotion of positive mental health, as well as intervention supports and responses in and out of school.
- The approach will be developmentally and culturally responsive.
- It will align with Yukon's Mental Health Strategy and be guided by the recommendations from the Yukon Youth Calls to Action – 2022 Youth Summit, which brings forward important perspectives from youth on supports that work for them.
- We are striving to create stronger connections to mental health and well-being supports, and resources provided in communities by

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Comprehensive Mental Health Approach (RISE)**Education

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partners and stakeholders as well as those offered within the school setting.

**Additional response—counsellors:**

- The department is looking at the School Counsellor program to ensure it meets the current needs of students.
- Based on what we hear we will look at creating a Wellness Coordinator program or something similar for every school, which is a key commitment as part of CASA.
- Meeting the mental health needs of students requires flexibility and diversity in the approach, including raising awareness of how to support mental well-being for all students.
- We are looking at approaches from inclusive, culturally appropriate programs, to targeted services for acute mental health challenges including clinical counsellors.
- It is also important that we take the time now to do the foundational work of engaging with our partners to inform a program that will meet the diverse needs of students.
- Clinical counselling support is important; however, it is only one aspect of the comprehensive mental health approach we take in Yukon schools.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- \$500k is in place in Education's budget beginning April 1st, 2023 to support mental health and wellness for Yukon students and schools.

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Comprehensive Mental Health Approach (RISE)**

Education

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- There is constant public conversation and demand for more mental health supports – especially for youth – in light of the pandemic and the opioid crisis.
- The Yukon Association of Education Professionals and Child and Youth Advocate Office have been advocating for clinical counsellors in each Yukon school.
- CASA: commits to an additional annual investment of \$1 million (across YG) for mental health outcomes for youth and create dedicated wellness counsellors or similar positions in all schools specifically dedicated to addressing the need for comprehensive mental health and wellness.

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**Background:**

- For acute mental health challenges, school-based staff help students and families connect with the most appropriate supports that are available within a community, including clinical counselling services.
- The school counsellor plays an essential role in supporting the well-being of students.
- We continue to hear a need for greater flexibility with the duties of this role in order to reflect a school community's needs and to address staffing challenges when filling these positions.
- We partner with Yukon First Nation governments and organizations to ensure that student supports are culturally responsive and include coordinated work with students and families (First Nation advocates, ESWs and CELCs).
- As an example, this fall we launched Ready-to-Learn Schools, a developmentally responsive approach that helps educators understand how trauma and toxic stress impacts brain development, functioning and learning.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

3/21/2023

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Formal Assessments (RISE)**Education

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**Value:**

- The 2019 Audit and the final report of the Review of Inclusive and Special Education tell us that we have to rethink how we're supporting students and delivering timely, effective supports for their learning needs.

**Recommended response:**

- We are developing criteria around prioritizing assessments and ensuring student learning needs are being addressed.
- The length of time to perform an assessment is dependent on the complexity of the student's needs, the nature of the assessment needed and schedule of the professional administering the assessment.
- If an assessment is needed, we will make sure that it is done within six months. If this work cannot be done within the department, we will contract this work out or we will reimburse parents to the assessment done privately.
- We have allocated additional funding of \$150K to outsource additional assessments. We have contracts in place to do this work.
- If a student needs a formal assessment, school staff can still implement many strategies, supports, and accommodations recommended through school-based teams and informal assessments to address the learning needs of the students so that they can be successful at school.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Formal Assessments (RISE)**Education

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- Along with other student support staff working in our schools and our central administration building, Speech-Language Pathologists are an essential support that we will continue to make available to address the learning needs of the students so that they can be successful at school.

**Additional response:**

- When an educator and/or parent has concerns about a student's learning, the first step is for the school-based team to discuss the student's needs and collaborate on what strategies or interventions should be implemented by school staff to support the student.
- If a referral is received from the school-based team, Student Support Services staff determine the type of assessments needed based on the nature of the need presented by the school based team and a review of the student's file.
- The Department of Education's Educational Psychologists work with each school to determine the priority for student assessments.
- A school may request specific or further support from Student Support Services, through an informal or formal assessment of the student's learning needs.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Auditor General of Canada made recommendations relating to this issue in their 2019 report (Recommendation #70).
- External stakeholders were invited to a Spark session focused on assessments in July, which may lead to questions around recommendations and actions.
- CBC aired a story about parents saying assessments were taking 2-3 years and that they had to pay for their own private assessments.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Formal Assessments (RISE)****Education**

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- CASA commitment: to provide, complete, and deliver the final report for psychoeducational assessments necessary to obtain an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) within six months of referrals from teachers, administrators or physicians. If the Government is unable to provide the assessment directly within this timeframe, it shall cover expenses incurred by parents to obtain the assessment externally

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**Background:**

- Students do not have to have a formal assessment in order to receive learning supports at school.
- The Education Act provides the framework for special education programs, including an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- Under the Act, school administration, in consultation with professional staff and parents, determines whether a student has special educational needs, and the appropriate special education program to meet those needs.
- School-based teams are made up of the school principal, learning assistance teacher, classroom teacher, other school staff and staff from Student Support Services. Parents are also valued members of the SBT. Other professionals may also be invited.
- A parent may request a school-based team meeting at any time for their child through their school.
- Sometimes the department/school is unable to obtain parent consent or a student's attendance issues may complicate the assessment process.

Current referral process for formal assessments

1. A concern is identified by the educator or parent.
2. The school-based team collects and reviews the relevant information.
3. The school-based team invites relevant Student Support Services staff to participate, based on the nature of the concern or issue that has been identified. This could include informal assessments where specific interventions may be recommended before a formal assessment is requested.
4. If an information assessment/consultation was done and the recommended interventions are not working, then Student Support Services staff and the

## Session Briefing Note

## Spring Session 2023

## Formal Assessments (RISE)

## Education

school-based team make recommendations for a formal assessment. Parental consent is required for formal assessments.

5. Based on the referral, Student Support Services staff respond by providing the services needed to support the student. Priority is given for a formal assessment when the student's learning is being severely impeded.
6. Student Support Services staff continue to work with school staff to support the student's learning by monitoring the student's needs and collaborating on programming to support the student's learning.

Speech language pathologists

- There are 4.0 FTE allocated in Student Support Services for Speech Language Pathologists. There is currently 1 FTE vacancy.
- We partner with the Child Development Centre, Mobile Therapeutic Unit and Health and Social Services for the provision of additional Speech and Language Pathologist services.
- Currently, we are contracting a local speech and language pathologist clinic to provide support and services (identifying need, developing support plans, training staff to implement articulation programming and fluency assessment and intervention).

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

03/15/2023

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Ready to Learn Schools (RISE)**Education

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**Value:**

- In response to the impacts of the COVID-10 pandemic, the Department of Education is taking action to create safer and more inclusive schools where students are ready and supported to learn.

**Recommended response:**

- The Ready-to-Learn Schools (R2L) program was introduced by staff at Takhini Elementary and is being introduced to schools across the Yukon.
- R2L has been implemented at: Takhini Elementary and Selkirk Elementary.
- This school year it is moving forward at Jack Hulland Elementary, Grey Mountain Primary and Selkirk Elementary School in Whitehorse, St. Elias Community School in Haines Junction and Nelna Bessie John School in Beaver Creek.
- Pre-engagement work has also begun at the Tantalus School (Carmacks) Del Van Gorder (Faro) and Robert Service (Dawson) schools. Responsive instructional approaches will eventually be implemented in all Yukon schools.
- Pre-engagement included reaching out to Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation government as per 17.7 provisions in their self-government agreement. Communications are ongoing.
- Ready-to-Learn trains teachers and staff to be developmentally responsive and to recognize that a child's chronological age may not match their emotional, cognitive or social age.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Ready to Learn Schools (RISE)**Education

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- It also helps educators understand how developmental adversity impacts brain development, functioning and learning.
- Based on the groundbreaking work of Dr. Bruce Perry, the program is grounded in the understanding that children can only be ready to learn when they feel safe and calm.

**Additional response:**

- There is an urgent need to build and implement a common understanding of how to take a positive behavioural and brain-based approach to working with students.
- Except in the rarest of cases, students do not come to school intending to be disruptive or harmful to others. In parallel, we've heard from school staff that they are burned out from the pandemic and need support to foster safer and more inclusive classrooms.
- Ready-to-Learn Schools is a program that supports schools in effecting positive social change and well-being for all students and staff.
- We will continue to communicate information with school communities, offer training opportunities related to this program, and share progress on implementation.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- This initiative is part of the department's response to the Review of Inclusive and Special Education and to the 2019 Office of the Auditor General Report on Kindergarten Through Grade 12 Education in Yukon.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Ready to Learn Schools (RISE)****Education**

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**Background:**

- This model was developed by brain development and trauma expert Dr. Bruce Perry, and is informed by more than 30 years of research. A key component of this initiative is teacher training in an evidence-based model called the Neurosequential Model in Education, or NME.
- In fall 2022 the department contracted two professionals who have the expertise, experience, capacity and capability to create a unified approach in schools across Yukon.
- The initiative is expanding in a phased approach, and will eventually be implemented in all Yukon schools.
- The Yukon First Nation School Board has stated its support for the NME approach and is interested in implementing R2L in its schools.
- Staff development on positive approaches to managing student behaviours and supporting students with diverse and special educational needs is a priority for Education. The Yukon Association of Education Professionals has also communicated the need for training and resources to support teachers to create inclusive classrooms.
- Ready-to-Learn Schools was launched as a pilot project at Takhini Elementary School in 2020.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****03/20/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education (RISE)**

Education

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**Value:**

- The 2019 Audit, the Final Report of the Review of Inclusive and Special Education and the Child and Youth Advocate Review on School Attendance tell us that we have to rethink how we're supporting students and delivering timely, effective supports for their learning needs.

**Suggested response:**

- We are working with our partners and stakeholders to reimagine and create schools that are safe, inclusive, that build on student strengths and ensure that every child feels connected and supported to thrive.
- This includes developing a Comprehensive Mental Health and Wellbeing Approach that aligns with the Yukon Mental Health Strategy.
- The approach will include prevention as well as developmental and clinical responses, and will create connections to mental health and wellbeing activities provided by partners and stakeholders.
- Since last summer, we've been advancing initiatives in the work plan developed in partnership with the First Nation Education Commission and the Advisory Committee on Yukon Education.
- We are also working with our education partners to support experiential learning opportunities in Yukon schools.

**Additional response:**

- A key initiative that launched this past fall (2022) was Ready-to-Learn Schools, based on the ground-breaking work of Dr. Bruce Perry's Neurosequential Model.

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**Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education (RISE)**

Education

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- The program is grounded in the understanding that children can only be ready to learn when they feel safe and calm.
- This model trains teachers and staff to be developmentally responsive to recognize that a child's chronological age may not match their emotional, cognitive or social age.
- Most importantly, it helps educators understand how developmental adversity impacts brain development, functioning and learning.
- This initiative empowers our teachers and school staff to understand, honour, support and guide our children so they are ready to learn as they travel along their own unique path.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Questions may be asked about the Yukon government's progress to implement recommendations from the audit and two reviews.

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**Background:**

- Many recommendations in the Review of Inclusive and Special Education, and the 2019 Office of the Auditor General Report on Kindergarten Through Grade 12 Education in Yukon overlap with those from Child and Youth Advocate's Review on School Attendance. Therefore, they are both being addressed in the "RISE" work plan.
- Both reviews involved extensive engagement with students, parents, First Nations and other education partners and stakeholders.
- In November 2021, the department, in partnership with the First Nation Education Commission and the Advisory Committee on Yukon Education, approved the work

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education (RISE)****Education**

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plan that is guiding our collective efforts to transform the education system and address barriers to inclusion and improved education outcomes for all students.

- The department hosted an Educational Summit in November 2021 with an estimated 600 online participants, representing our education partners and stakeholders, as well as broad representation from the department.
- In May 2022 the department hosted a conference for members of the Communities of Inquiry, the First Nation Education Commission and the Advisory Committee on Yukon Education.
- The COIs have a variety of representatives from First Nations governments, non-governmental organizations such as the Child Development Centre, Autism Yukon and the Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon, school councils, and school-based and central administration staff. Membership varies by COI.
- This COI approach respects the collaborative nature of the inquiry process and ensures that Yukon context and Yukon First Nations' ways of knowing, being and doing are incorporated into all actions flowing from both reviews and the department is not making decisions without involving our partners and stakeholders in the process.
- The community of inquiry addressing Experiential learning has put forward recommendations and is currently working on further recommendations to address cultural camps and other experiential learning opportunities.
- Several Yukon schools offer experiential learning programs, including:
  - Golden Horn Elementary School – Great Outdoor Experiential School Philosophy (G.O.E.S.) which is a weekly class block dedicated to providing students with challenge and achievement through academic, athletic, cultural and social endeavours. G.O.E.S. encourages students in learning-by-doing, on the land, field trips or in the beautiful forest that surrounds the school. The experiential model of Golden Horn Elementary School is a long-standing approach to education that is also supported by Golden Horn's School Council and is part of a whole school approach to outdoor experiential learning.
  - Elijah Smith Elementary School – partnered with YFNED and KDFN to host an experiential culture-based week of activities. Throughout the week, students were able to participate in various activities led by Indigenous Knowledge

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education (RISE)****Education**

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Keepers such as cutting and drying, creating button blanket dolls, caribou hide tanning, hand games, etc.

- Wood Street – offers a wide variety of experiential learning programs where academics is integrated with heritage, adventure, outdoors, skills, theatre and art.
- Hidden Valley Students are exposed to onsite camping, hiking, snowshoeing, kick-sledding, and cross-country skiing activities. The intermediate grades are learning paddling, camping, and team-building skills, and participate in multiple trips throughout the year.

Ready-to-Learn Schools

- Ready-to-Learn Schools was launched as a pilot project at Takhini Elementary School in 2020.
- This school year it is moving forward at schools operated by Education and the First Nation School Board: Jack Hulland Elementary, Grey Mountain Primary and Selkirk Elementary School in Whitehorse, St. Elias Community School in Haines Junction and Nelna Bessie John School in Beaver Creek.
- Responsive instructional approaches will eventually be implemented in all Yukon schools.
  - Pre-engagement with Robert Service school included reaching out to Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in First Nation government as per 17.7 provisions in their self-government agreement.
- We have contracted two professionals who have the expertise, experience, capacity and capability to create a unified approach across Yukon. They will expand in a phased approach, starting in fall 2022.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****04/26/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Child Development Centre Funding**

Education

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**Highways and Public Works will respond to building and lease questions.**

**Value:**

- Education and Health and Social Services work collaboratively with partners including the Child Development Centre to improve ways to provide the best services and supports to Yukon children and families.

**Recommended response:**

- We acknowledge and very much appreciate the Child Development Centre's (CDC) important work helping families and young children access inclusive early learning and therapeutic services.
- This also includes providing support to educators working with children with diverse developmental needs in licensed early learning and child care centres.
- I was happy to meet with the executive director and board members of the CDC in August 2022 to discuss their annual report, their plans for renewal, and how we could support them going forward. In addition to my meeting with the CDC, department officials meet with the CDC regularly.
- Previously, we provided the CDC with funds to undertake an organizational review to look at their current structure and develop a plan on how they might change things to better serve Yukon children.
- The implementation of the CDC's renewal plan to better serve Yukon children will occur over three stages and will better align therapists' time to help alleviate the current waitlists. We are providing the necessary funding to support this plan.



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Child Development Centre Funding****Education**

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**Additional Response – Funding:**

- In 2022-23 we provided approximately \$3.4 million in operational funding for the CDC. In 2023-24 we will provide approximately \$4.3 million in funding. The additional funding will enable the CDC to provide additional supports to Yukon families, address the waiting list and move forward with their renewal plans.
- Additionally, the Yukon government is funding the renovations and lease for the CDC's new space that will be ready in summer 2023. This new location will better accommodate all of the CDC programs, clients and staff in one location.
- Funding allows the CDC to provide services to children and families in every Yukon community, including onsite therapeutic services at Dusk'a Head Start Early Learning Centre located at Kwanlin Dün First Nation.
- It is unfortunate the CDC had to relocate, and we appreciate their flexibility and ability to move and quickly resume their service delivery, including the therapeutic pre-school.
- Education will continue to work with Highways and Public Works, Health and Social Services and the CDC on solutions for their interim space requirements until they are in their permanent space.

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**Context – this may be an issue because:**

- The CDC continues to operate out of temporary spaces until they move into their permanent home in summer 2023.
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**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Child Development Centre Funding****Education**

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**Background:**Space

- The CDC is temporarily located out of three spaces (Waterfront Place, Industrial Road and Alexander Street) until their new space is ready.
- As of December 2022, the CDC had moved out of Copper Ridge Place and into a temporary location at Waterfront Place (the former COVID Assessment Centre). The therapeutic pre-school continues to operate out of a temporary space on Alexander Street. Additionally, they have office space on Industrial Road.
- It is anticipated that the CDC will move into its new space, identified as the “Peacock Sales building,” located at 206 Hanson Street in June 2023. The move has been postponed from October 2022 due to delays in construction.

Anticipated costs

- Total cost of fit up/furnishings \$2,685,005 (includes \$125,000 in fit up costs).
- Renovations:
  - Original request \$1,268,979 for 8,057 sq. ft. at a cost of \$150 + GST per sq. ft.).
  - Revised request \$2,560,005 for increase in space to 10,836 sq. ft. at a cost of \$225 + GST per sq. ft., which will accommodate the whole program immediately. An additional 1,667 sq. ft. of storage space will be provided without a renovation charge.
  - Lease cost for first three years: \$501,058 annually or \$39.50 sq. ft. (prorated for 2023-24) which includes 10,836 square feet for program space and an additional 1,667 sq. ft. for storage and other use.
  - The renovation/fit up cost is a one-time expense whereas the lease cost is an annual expense. The lease will increase by 2.25% annually starting in year 4.
  - The original estimates increased due to construction costs and more space becoming available.

Organizational review

- In 2021-22, the department funded the CDC to undertake a review of services and they have since shared two reports: Yukon Child Development Centre Strategic

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**Child Development Centre Funding**

**Education**

Planning and Structural Renewal report and Summary of Funding Requests:  
Structural Renewal and Collective Bargaining.

- The ELCC unit continues to work with and support the CDC in identifying their future needs.
- In 2023-24, additional funding will be provided for administrative and program support, and to pilot a family partners project.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**03/29/2023**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives**Education

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**Universal Child Care: refer to EL04****Value:**

- We continue to work with Yukon First Nations and other partners to enhance early learning and child care programming in the Yukon, as we move toward a future where all families have access to high-quality early learning and child care that is affordable, accessible and inclusive.

**Recommended response:**

- We heard loud and clear in various engagements on universal child care that in addition to affordability and accessibility for families, we needed to address quality.
- We have made great strides in addressing quality by:
  - increasing wages for educators to some of the highest in Canada,
  - introducing funding for operators to access comprehensive health insurance benefits, and
  - increasing our funding for program and cultural supports to enhance early learning programs.
- We are investing heavily in professional learning and development opportunities. This includes innovative and flexible training options for early childhood educators to become fully qualified while continuing to work.
- Investing in early childhood educators is one way we continue to support the growth and expansion of high-quality early learning and child care in the Yukon.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives**Education

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**Additional response: Training Partnerships**

- We are partnering with Yukon University to offer the Professional Diploma Pathways Program, where early childhood educators assessed as “level 3 equivalent” can complete the requirements for a level 3 Early Childhood Educator certificate and become fully qualified.
- We are funding Yukon University to provide enhanced course offerings in rural Yukon communities.
- We are partnering with the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and the Early Years Program to offer “*Understanding the Early Years*,” a course that, once successfully completed, will allow participants to receive a level one early childhood educator certificate.
- We are providing education bursaries for post-secondary study as well as an enhanced bursary option, up to \$500, for educators to access other learning and development opportunities. We will also contract with individuals and organizations to create and deliver workshops and training opportunities.

**Additional response: Advisory Committee**

- In order to support and develop high-quality early learning and child care programs, the Early Learning and Child Care Unit has established a program-level advisory committee.
- This committee is made up of early learning representatives from Yukon First Nation governments, Whitehorse, and rural communities who provide their advice and feedback on programming.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives****Education**

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- As we create new licensed spaces and improve quality in programming the cost of delivering universal child care will increase.
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**Background:**Quality Enhancement Funding, including cultural and inclusive/diverse supports

- Licensed programs and early childhood educators have access to develop high quality and culturally rich early learning programs and environments.
- In 2023-24, \$300,000 is budgeted to support educators in their early learning practice.
- The ELCC unit is also providing \$286,000 in funding to Dusk'a Head Start Family Learning Centre, owned and operated by Kwanlin Dün First Nation, for a cultural connector program.
- As of February 15, 2023, 50 programs and 297 early childhood educators accessed this funding or availed themselves of cultural resource kits curated by early learning specialists. Additionally, 18 early kindergarten teachers in Yukon schools benefited from cultural resource kits.
- In 2021-22, \$338,377 was spent on the cultural enhancement program with 43 licensed programs and 223 early childhood educators participating.

Funding to increase wages and benefits for early childhood educators

- Wages for early childhood educators employed by operators who opted into universal child care increased effective April 1, 2021. Funding includes an additional payment of 14% of wage costs to operators for mandatory employment-related costs (e.g., CPP, EI, and WCB contributions). Fully qualified early childhood educators in the Yukon now make over \$30 an hour – some of the highest wages in Canada.
- As of February 2023, 50 programs (3 family day homes and 47 centres) or more than 64% of licensed programs are taking advantage of comprehensive health insurance benefit funding.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives****Education**

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Professional development

- By signing on to universal child care, all ELCC providers have committed to collaborating on all improvement activities such as quality measurement, professional development for their staff, and collaboration with early learning specialists.
- The ELCC unit launched the online early childhood educators learning hub on August 9, 2022.
- In late August 2022, the ELCC unit started hosting open houses and professional development opportunities for educators and operators, both in person and online.

Bursaries

- Funding is directed towards a bursary program for students enrolled in early childhood development studies. Full-time bursaries are awarded for \$2,000 per term, and part-time bursaries are awarded for \$500 per course.
- As of February 15, 2023, 64 bursaries (61 part-time and 3 full-time) have been awarded thus far in 2022-23. Of the full-time bursaries, two recipients were from rural communities and one from a Whitehorse French language program. Eleven of the part-time bursaries went to recipients in rural Yukon.

Professional Diploma Pathways (PDP) Program

- As of January 2023, 39 students are enrolled in the PDP program.
- In addition to the partnership with Yukon University, the ELCC unit is partnering with La Garderie to support their French speaking level 3 equivalent educators to become fully qualified.

Other initiatives

- Planning commenced in September 2022 for the development of a robust data management system to support high-quality early learning and child care in the Yukon.
- The review of the early learning supported child care programs began in September 2022 with a local consultant contracted to undertake the review. The review is expected to be completed by the end of March 2023.

# Session Briefing Note

# Spring Session 2023

## Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives

## Education

### Technical advisory committee

- The technical advisory committee was established in September 2022 to satisfy our requirement with Canada to have an advisory committee and to address an internal need to invite others into our work in a formal way.
- Prior to this, ELCC Program staff reached out to First Nation governments and stakeholders on an ad hoc basis to seek advice on various projects.
- Including First Nations governments and stakeholders through a more formalized process allows the ELCC Unit to collaboratively engage on an ongoing basis and transparently shape the direction of the Yukon early learning and child care system.
- The inclusion of First Nations, francophone and rural operators was prioritized as these groups have unique needs and can offer perspectives to help ensure Yukon's child care system is responsive and meeting the needs of families.
- The advisory committee includes First Nations government representatives, rural and urban operators, French language program representative, educator representative, Child Care Board representative, Yukon First Nation Education Directorate representative (Early Years Program) and the Child Development Centre.

### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2/27/2023**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved



**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care**

Education

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**Value:**

- The Department of Education works collaboratively to provide services and supports to Yukon children and families.

**Recommended response:**

- The Teen Parent Centre brings together a variety of supports for students during and after pregnancy, including providing a safe and caring environment, access to healthy meals, academic support and onsite child care.
- I am pleased to welcome the TPC Child Care Society, the new society that was licensed on January 31, 2023, to start operating the on-site child care program.
- We supported the new society in navigating the licensing process and we will continue to support them as they move forward.
- I want to thank the Teen Parent Access to Education Society for operating the child care centre until the new society was licensed. We acknowledge their many years of important work and dedication to supporting student parents as they further their education.

**Additional response:**

- There are no plans to close the Teen Parent Centre and the support available to students and their children has not changed.
- Across the Yukon, the Teen Parent Grant provides funding for free child care for high school students who are also parents.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care****Education**

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- In December 2022, the TPC Child Care Society was formed with the intention of taking over operation of the onsite early learning and child care program.
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**Background:**New operator: on-site child care

- The TPC Child Care Society was issued a license on January 31, 2023 to operate the early learning and child care program at the Teen Parent Centre.
- The department's ELCC unit supported the new society in that process and had regular meetings and other communication to answer questions and support them moving forward.
- Additionally, the Department is supporting the new society with a transfer payment agreement and a license agreement for use of the space.
- Two board members (out of 7) have recently resigned from the society stating concerns about the direction of the new society.
- On April 17, 2023, the educator in the program (she is also one of the board members who resigned) notified ELCC she was resigning from her employment leaving the program without an educator. As a result of the resignation, the program will have to close temporarily until they can recruit staff. The society was already in the process of interviewing staff for the program.
- ELCC is making arrangements for the children and families in the program to be accommodated elsewhere until the new staff can start.
- ELCC is in regular contact with the new society.

Previous operator: on-site child care

- The Teen Parent Access to Education Society (TPAES) was licensed to operate the onsite child care centre until January 31, 2023.
- They were not active in managing the daycare and the responsibility for the daycare's operation and employees was left to a Department of Education employee.
- TPAES was not in good standing with the Societies Act and as a result, the Yukon government could not provide funding to it. They had not filed the necessary paperwork with Corporate Registry for 2019-20, 2020-21 or 2021-22.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Teen Parent Centre and Onsite Child Care****Education**

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- TPAES was given an order on September 12, 2022, to resume management of the daycare or surrender their licence. The order deadline was extended to January 31, 2023, to allow time to explore options for next steps.
- While the society did not regain good standing, they did take responsibility for the operation of the child care centre in October 2022.
- In 2021-22, TPAES's representative signed a transfer payment agreement for the total amount of \$180,989. Of that amount, \$133,000 in funding was advanced before it became known that they were no longer in good standing. They were not provided any funding for 2022-23.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****4/19/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Universal Child Care****Education**

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**Child Development Centre Funding: refer to EL01**

**Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives: refer to EL02**

**Yukon Child Care Board and Child Care Act Review: refer to EL05**

**Value:**

- We continue to work with Yukon First Nations and other partners to enhance early learning and child care programming in the Yukon, as we move toward a future in which all families have access to high-quality early learning and child care that is affordable, accessible and inclusive.

**Recommended response:**

- We are honored to be receiving national recognition for the Yukon's universal child care system – a blend of non-profit, owner-operator, family day home and First Nations government-owned and operated programs.
- In 2023-24, I am very pleased to say that the budget for Early Learning and Child Care is just over \$43.4 million, with another \$515 thousand invested in capital to support the development of a data management system. Among other quality initiatives, the funding supports:
  - over 400 early childhood educators,
  - 78 licensed operators
  - allowing for 2162 licensed spaces.
- As of March 01, 2023, 1727 children and their families were benefiting from universal child care.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Universal Child Care****Education**

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- The universal child care program has reduced parent fees to less than \$10 per day on average in the Yukon. Families are saving up to \$8400 a year for each child enrolled in a licensed program.
- Since the implementation of universal child care in April 2021, 350 child care spaces have been created in Pelly Crossing, Whitehorse, Ross River and Dawson, and we continue to expand and grow. All licensed programs are a part of the universal child care program and receive funding from Yukon government.
- The funding agreements signed with the Government of Canada in the summer of 2021 continue to support development and expansion of the Yukon's universal child care system and early childhood educator workforce development.

**Additional response:**

- We provide funding – including wage enhancements – to all licensed programs to reduce operational and administrative expenses and to support program needs.
- We continue to provide a subsidy program that further reduces child care fees for low-income earners who may require additional financial support. Teen parents and grandparents with primary responsibility for their grandchildren receive free child care.
- In addition to fee reductions, we also administer a supported child care program that provides funding to licensed programs for additional supports for children who need them.
- Providing greater access to early learning and child care programs that are affordable, accessible and inclusive reduces barriers to

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Universal Child Care****Education**

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entering the workforce and ensures proper supports are in place for families when parents are returning to work.

**Additional Response (if asked about minimum wage increase and increased costs to operators)**

- A key to successful recruitment and retention is the ability to pay qualified early childhood educators a fair wage.
- In April 2021, the Yukon implemented a wage of \$31 for fully qualified educators, one of the highest in Canada.
- The wage grid is tied to minimum wage increases whereby program operators have to pay at least the minimum wage and Yukon government provides a top up. For level 3 educators, Yukon contributes almost 50% of the wages.
- We continue to provide 100% of the wages for supported child care workers.
- In 2023/24, parents may see higher than normal increases to child care fees due to higher wages for educators tied to the minimum wage and other increased costs due to inflation.
- Yukon government will continue to heavily subsidize child care in the Yukon.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- As we create new spaces and improve quality in programming, the cost of delivering universal child care will increase.
- Operators may ask for increases in funding as the rate of inflation increases.

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**Background:**

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Summary of the Yukon Early Learning and Child Care Funding Program

- The new funding model came into effect on April 1, 2021, and the government budgeted a total of \$25,202,000 in 2021-2022 to support the new program.
- In 2023-24, the operations and maintenance budget is \$43,442,903, and \$515,000 is invested in capital.
- Under agreements with the Government of Canada, the Yukon government will receive approximately \$54.3 million from 2021 to 2025, to further enhance the universal ELCC program.

Affordability

- The universal child care program reduces parent fees by up to \$700 (per child per month) for full-time enrollment in licensed programs. All licensed programs have signed on to universal child care.
- Parent fee increases are controlled to ensure parent fees remain affordable
- Most provinces and territories limit fee reduction and affordability measures to children who have not yet started school, whereas Yukon applies fee reductions to all children in licensed spaces.
- Yukon government highly subsidizes child care in Yukon. In addition to reduced child care fees for parents; wages, eligible building operating expenses (37% in Yukon and 43% in rural Yukon), and benefits are subsidized.
- The wages for educators is tied to minimum wage increases whereby program operators have to pay at least the minimum wage and Yukon government provides a wage top up. As of April 01, for Whitehorse level 3 educators, Yukon will contribute 48% of the mandated wage and in rural Yukon we will contribute 50.5% of the mandated wage.
- In 2023/24, parents will see higher than typical increases to child care fees due to higher wages for educators tied to the minimum wage and other increased costs due to inflation.

Accessibility

- Since April 1, 2021, there have been 350 additional spaces created, which includes 26 licensed spaces at Little Critters in Dawson City (opened in January 2022) and 49 licensed spaces at Tu Lidlini program in Ross River (opened in February 2022).

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Universal Child Care****Education**

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- Dunya Ra Kats Inte Ku, owned and operated by Selkirk First Nation government, re-opened on October 17, 2022, with 18 licensed spaces. The community has not had child care options for 2 years, since the building housing their program burnt down.
- On September 28, 2022, a child care license was issued to The Heart of Riverdale Community Centre, a non-profit society, to operate the Heart of Riverdale – Heart Heroes, licensed for 24 child care space.
- The ELCC unit is also collaborating with the Government of the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation officials to support them in exploring options that ensure consistent child care.

Reduction in operational and administrative expenses for ELCC program operators

- Additional funding is provided to operators to reduce their operational and administrative expenses and to support program needs. This funding provides for 37% of program building expenses (such as rent/mortgage, insurance, electricity, heat, janitorial, etc.) in Whitehorse and 43% in rural communities.
- Start-up funding is available for the creation of new licensed programs. Funding is also available to address health and safety concerns.

Little Blue

- Dawson Society for Children and Families (operating as Little Blue) was awarded up to \$75,000 in funding from the Community Development Fund (CDF) in 2022 to hire a contractor to develop/design blueprints and work on building cost estimates. The total cost of this phase was estimated to be \$102,000.
- They recently completed this stage of their project that involved working with their stakeholders and a contractor on blueprints for the expanded program. They have shared draft blueprints with ELCC staff.
- The final cost of the project was \$69,150 with CDF covering \$60,718 and ELCC contributing \$8,432.
- The Department of Education continues to work with EMR on a one government approach on next steps.

Carcross/Tagish First Nation - Haa Yátx'i Hidí

- The child care centre is currently closed while they work on staffing issues.



**Session Briefing Note**  
**Universal Child Care****Spring Session 2023**  
EducationKluane First Nation – Kluane Daycare

- The child care centre (with an average of 4 – 6 children enrolled) is currently closed due to the two staff being on medical leave without any substitutes to replace them.
- A Kluane First Nation representative advised ELCC on March 7, 2023 that the program would be closed for approximately a month.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****3/29/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2022**

**Yukon Child Care Board and Child Care Act review**

Education

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**Child Development Centre Funding: refer to EL01**

**Early Learning and Child Care Initiatives: refer to EL02**

**Universal Child Care: refer to EL04**

**Value:**

- We recognize the importance of early learning and child care for Yukon families, and the need to continue to improve children's learning opportunities and outcomes.

**Child Care Act review:**

- We have committed to begin the work to review the Yukon's Child Care Act, which is reflected in my mandate letter.
- To begin this work, we have reviewed all the feedback from engagements with First Nations governments, the Yukon Child Care Board and stakeholders over the past couple of years.
- We released a report this week that outlines themes that will inform next steps. We will continue to consult and engage with partners and stakeholders as the work to review Yukon's *Child Care Act* advances.
- We have acted on many of the priorities we heard in these engagements. Over the past two years, we have made changes to policies and implemented new programs.
- In addition to affordability for families, the Child Care Board specifically wanted us to look at quality and wages for educators.
- We have followed through by increasing wages for early childhood educators to some of the highest in Canada, as well as offering access to funding for a comprehensive health insurance benefits program.

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2022**

### **Yukon Child Care Board and Child Care Act review**

Education

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- We are investing in continuing education for educators and increasing our funding for operators to enhance their early learning programs.

#### **Child Care Board:**

- We value our ongoing dialogue with the Yukon Child Care Board and the important input the members provide in the development and support of early learning and child care services for Yukon families.
- I was pleased to meet with the Board in November 2022 to discuss their report and the future of early learning and child care in the Yukon.
- In its Annual Report for 2021-22, the Board recognized the work that has already begun and noted they were happy to engage fully in collaboration.
- We will continue to work with the Yukon Child Care Board as we advance this work.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Department of Education has begun work to review the Yukon's Child Care Act and is working on next steps.
- The Yukon Child Care Board's 2021-22 Annual Report noted "no progress" on modernization of the *Child Care Act*, review of the Supported Child Care program, and the Board's budget.

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#### **Background:**

##### **Yukon Child Care Board (YCCB)**

- The YCCB is established under the *Child Care Act* to:

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2022****Yukon Child Care Board and Child Care Act review****Education**

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- encourage the development and support of child care services;
- make recommendations to the Minister on matters pertaining to child care;
- review government policies, programs, services, or procedures in matters pertaining to child care;
- advise on the planning, development, standards, coordination and evaluation of child care services; and
- hear appeals under the Act.

**YCCB annual report**

- The 2021-22 annual report was prepared in spring 2022, after the spring sitting had ended, so it was tabled in fall 2022.
- The report noted the work that had been carried out since the transfer of ELCC to Education by noting:

“The Yukon Government and the Yukon Department of Education should be proud of the accomplishments made and the steps forward that have been taken. We are beginning to see true change in recognizing the importance of the early years of life and the value of the educators who work with the children”.
- The YCCB highlighted a number of areas which have had significant progress (recruitment and retention, universal child care and YCCB outreach), incomplete progress (board member appointments and funding for training) and no progress (modernization of *Child Care Act*, review of supported child care program and budget).
- Between the time the report was written and when it was tabled in the Legislative Assembly additional progress has been made on board appointments, a consultant was engaged to review the supported child care program (expected completion spring 2023) and there were new investments in professional development for educators.
- Additionally, in December 2022 Education met with the YCCB to discuss their budget.

**Engagement**

- Many of the items heard through various engagements were actionable through amendments to policies, and development and implementation of new programs:

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- A Professional Diploma Pathway (PDP) program was developed with Yukon University to provide an accelerated pathway for educators with a level 3 equivalency to receive full certification as a level 3 early childhood educator;
- The PDP program is flexible on when courses are being held and offers innovative practicum placements for early childhood educators (ECEs) working in the field;
- Investment in bursaries was increased for ECEs, for both post-secondary study and other learning and development opportunities; and
- Wages for educators were substantially increased, with fully qualified ECEs in the Yukon now earning over \$30 an hour – some of the highest wages in Canada; and
- Access to funding for comprehensive health insurance benefits for staff of licensed early learning and child care centres was introduced.

**What We Heard / Potential Child Care Act amendments**

- Based on the engagement feedback, the report highlights a number of potential *Child Care Act* amendments that could, if passed, strengthen and legislate improvements already implemented through the new universal child care system, including where government funding has reduced rates for families to below \$10 per day on average, increased minimum wages for early childhood educators to the highest in the country, and enhanced program quality.
- The report also includes potential amendments that could:
  - improve inclusive supports;
  - simplify subsidy processes for families and operators;
  - modernize credentialing and licensing requirements for educators;
  - support continued professional development for educators; and
  - update the role and powers of the Yukon Child Care Board.

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**Spring Session 2022**

**Yukon Child Care Board and Child Care Act review**

Education

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Approved by:

Mary Cameron

3/29/2023

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **Collaboration – Advisory Committee for Yukon Education**

Education

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#### **Value:**

- The Government of Yukon is committed to enhancing community involvement in school governance and public education.

#### **Recommended response:**

- The Advisory Committee for Yukon Education provides advice on system-wide education matters.
- We are pleased to now have a representative on the committee bringing Early Learning and Child Care perspectives from the Child Care Board.
- The last meeting was held on March 3. It was focused on seeking feedback on ongoing priorities and the function of the committee.
- Steps are underway to fill committee member positions with educators and school council members.

#### **Additional response:**

- The Advisory Committee for Yukon Education typically meets quarterly. Currently, meeting dates for 2022-23 are being finalized.
- We value working with school councils, partners in education and with the Advisory Committee for Yukon Education on joint priorities and initiatives in education in Yukon, including those related to school governance.
- Meeting minutes and information on the committee is available at Yukon.ca.

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **Collaboration – Advisory Committee for Yukon Education**

Education

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There was media coverage about how the department consults with School Councils and partners during the pandemic.
- During the 2021 PAC hearing, questions about the committee were raised.

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#### **Background:**

- The committee's work during the previous school years has focused on the pandemic response and recovery and continued work on key aspects of education identified in the 2019 audit report.
- A key priority is now working to advance Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education in an advisory capacity along with the First Nations Education Commission. ACYE worked collaboratively with the FNEC to develop a work plan to guide next steps in response to recommendations in the RISE final report.
- The partners represented on this committee include: educators (1 position being filled), the Yukon Association of Education Professionals and the Association of Yukon School Administrators; the First Nations Education Commission and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate; School Councils (2 positions being confirmed/filled), the Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards & Committees and the Catholic Education Association of Yukon; CSFY – Yukon Francophone School Board and First Nation School Board; Yukon University; Child Care Board; and Education officials, including the Deputy Minister and ADMs.

**Approved by:**

Mary Cameron

03/07/2023

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved



**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**CSFY Request for School in Dawson**

Education

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**Value:**

- We work collaboratively with the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon – CSFY – to support the learning needs of French First Language students and the path for the administration of French First Language education in the territory.

**Recommended response:**

- Work continues in respect to CSFY's request for the establishment of a French First language school in Dawson City.
- This is a priority for the Francophone school board and Francophone parents in Dawson, and our government recognizes their interest in expanding French First language schooling in the Yukon.
- We are working with the CSFY, as well as Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in under section 17.7 of its Self-Government Agreement, on French First language programming in Dawson.

**Additional response:**

- This school year, French First language students in Dawson have access to enhanced activities through the École Nomade home schooling program.
- The CSFY and the Department of Education have established an effective working relationship and officials will continue to navigate and approach the work ahead in a good way.
- There are many steps involved and we are committed to working collaboratively with our partners.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****CSFY Request for School in Dawson****Education**

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- CSFY has requested that a French first language school be established in Dawson City.

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**Background:**

- The feasibility study submitted on February 28, 2022, to the Minister of Education, remains under review, as the Department of Education continues to assess the feasibility of the proposed program.
- Under s.23 of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, French and English linguistic minorities in Canada have a constitutional right to publicly funded primary and secondary school education in their own language, where the number of rights holders warrant.
- The government is legally obliged to both address CSFY's request under O.I.C. 2016/156 and address Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in's concerns through negotiations under section 17.7 of the Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in Self-Government Agreement.
- In response to CSFY's request for an update on this initiative, Minister McLean and the DM met with CSFY's officials and trustees on December 9, 2022.
- In December 2022, a permanent teacher was hired for the École Nomade home schooling program. This teacher began on February 6, 2023. The main duties are to provide support and services to families in Dawson enrolled in école Nomade. This will include support to parents for home schooling and after school activities.
- On September 27, 2022, CSFY submitted an update to the section of the Feasibility Study concerning the potential number of students for a French First Language school in Dawson.
- At that time, CSFY communicated a preference to pause the Dawson Francophone School Committee meetings until the Government approves the updated Feasibility Study report.
- 15 right-holder students (Category 1 and 2) from Kindergarten to Grade 4 are pre-registered for the 2023-2024 school year.
- On December 16, 2022, Statistics Canada released the regional, 2021 Census results, which for the first time identified minority French language rights holders. This shows a total of 40 school-aged children (0-19) in Dawson, and 20 in the

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****CSFY Request for School in Dawson**

Education

grades CSFY seeks to establish. This provides baseline data for identifying future population trends.

- CSFY originally requested that the school be established by August 2022. They publicly announced on March 24th (blog) and April 4th (CBC) that the project was proceeding for the start of the 2022-23 school year.
- On July 5th, CSFY sent a letter to Dawson parents to inform them of CSFY's decision to delay the opening of the Francophone school.
- CSFY has rented a space that will allow them to offer resources in French for families through the home education program as well as to continue offering organized activities for families and their children.
- On May 25, 2022, Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in expressed concerns about the potential impact to its citizens on the establishment of a French First Language program in Dawson.
- Department officials continue to meet with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in officials to address their concerns.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****3/1/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **School Board and Council Elections and Referendums**

Education

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School Governance and Associations: refer to TAB EP04

First Nation School Board: refer to TAB FN10

#### **Value:**

- School Council members and School Board trustees play an important role in supporting student success, and the Government of Yukon is committed to enhancing community involvement in school governance.

#### **Recommended response:**

- I would like to thank the school community members who participated in the First Nation School Board referendum process.
- I am pleased to announce that the following three schools will be managed and operated by the First Nation School Board as of the start of the 2023-24 school year:
  - Eliza Van Bibber School, Pelly Crossing
  - Ghùch Tlâ Community School, Carcross
  - Kluane Lake School, Destruction Bay
- I would also like to recognize the Chief Electoral Officer, Max Harvey and his team at Elections Yukon, who worked tirelessly to oversee the democratic process in communities across the Yukon.
- Education officials will work with the First Nation School Board to ensure a smooth transition of these schools from governance of the Department of Education to the school board.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****School Board and Council Elections and Referendums**Education

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**Forming or Joining a School Board:**

- The Education Act outlines a process for school communities to decide whether to be governed by a school board. The Department of Education aims to increase awareness of this process, but it is up to each school community to decide whether to take this approach.
- I encourage school councils considering forming a school board to reach out to the Department of Education, recognizing that the First Nation School Board took a number of years to establish.

**School Board Elections:**

- This past November 7, voting for new trustees for the First Nation School Board and the commission scolaire francophone du Yukon took place.
- I am excited to be working on the next chapter of the First Nation School Board. with the newly elected trustees, Shadelle Chambers, Erin Pauls, Dana Tizya-Tram, Jocelyn Joe-Strack and Gillian Staveley.
- I am happy to work with the trustees of the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, to continue to advance French first language education in the Yukon. Congratulations to Jean-Sebastien Blais, Jessica Masson Guerette, Myriam Bougie, Veronique Maggiore and Jesse Cooke.

**School Council Elections**

- Congratulations to the following people, who were acclaimed to the new Whistle Bend School Council: Tia Campbell, Cassandra Malach, Brian Laird, Andrea Oldridge and Rebecca Hutchings-Archibald.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****School Board and Council Elections and Referendums**Education

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- The newly established Whistle Bend School Council will work with the Department of Education to prepare Whistle Bend Elementary School students once construction is complete.
- School council vacancies after an election are common and can be filled by the current school council or the incoming school council nominating people, or by a by-election to fill vacancies.
- I thank everyone who put their names forward to serve as school board trustees and school council members, and who support their schools through their volunteer activities.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The referendum process for school communities to consider joining the First Nation School Board will generate considerable interest.

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**Background:**

- Under the *Education Act*, school board elections take place every three years, and school council elections are held every two years.
- School Council elections were held in May 2022, and trustee elections for the CSFY and the FNSB were held in November 2022.
- Following the 2022 elections, of the 19 school councils the following eight require appointments by the Minister:
  - Eliza Van Bibber (1 of 3)
  - FH Collins (2 of 7)
  - Ghùch Tlà Community (1 of 5)
  - J.V. Clark (2 of 3)
  - Khàtinaxh (2 of 3)
  - Kluane Lake (2 of 5)
  - Porter Creek (3 of 7)
  - Robert Service (3 of 6)
- With the exception of Ghùch Tlà Community School Council, all school councils are able to function with their current membership. The School Council Liaison has

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****School Board and Council Elections and Referendums**Education

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requested that CTFN appoint guaranteed representatives to enable the school council to operate.

- The process for filling seats involves school council members making recommendations. The School Council Liaison is working with school councils to identify members to recommend for appointment.
- Under the Act, a new or existing School Board can be substituted for an existing school council when the school council, or 20% of the electors in the attendance area, requests that a referendum be held.
- Education officials worked with the First Nation School Board (FNSB) and Elections Yukon to establish a process for schools to consider joining the school board after it has been in existence for at least one school year, as allowed for in the *Education Act*.
- If the result is in favour of the establishing a School Board, or substitution with an existing Board, this will be made effective the first day of the next following school year.

**Expanded Voting – 2022 School Board Elections**

- Unlike previous school board elections, which have only taken place in Whitehorse, polling stations were located in several rural Yukon communities.
- In addition, the Chief Electoral Officer temporarily brought in the following changes for 2022 using his authorities under the *Education Act* to address new or unforeseen circumstances:
  - Use of an internet voting pilot;
  - Expanded use and circulation of mail-in ballots; and
  - Expansion of voting to Saturday.
- In order for any of these process changes to become permanent changes to the *Education Act* and School Board Election Regulations would be required.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****3/8/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****School Governance and Associations**Education

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School Board and Council Elections and Referendums: refer to TAB EP03

First Nation School Board: refer to TAB FN10

**Value:**

- School Council members and School Board trustees play an important role in supporting student success.
- The Government of Yukon is committed to enhancing community involvement in school governance.

**Recommended response:**

- I want to thank all current and previous members of School Councils, School Boards and associations who have worked hard to make their school communities a better place; your dedication is acknowledged.
- The Department of Education works directly with School Councils and School Boards to ensure the effective operation of schools at the local level, respecting all roles and responsibilities under the Education Act in the governance of schools.
- We also collaborate with the Association of Yukon School Councils Boards and Committees and the Catholic Education Association of Yukon to support the work of school councils and to seek advice and address issues affecting the entire education system.

**Additional response—school council liability:**

- The Education Act states that a school board or council is not liable for anything done or omitted, without negligence, in the exercise of a power conferred by the Act.



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****School Governance and Associations****Education**

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- In a situation where a school board or council is named in a court case, the Yukon government will work to support the organization and its members on a case-by-case basis.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There may be questions about how the department works with and supports school boards and councils.
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**Background:**

- There are 29 'brick and mortar' public schools in the Yukon. Of these:
  - Two are operated by the Francophone School Board (la commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, or CSFY);
  - Eight are operated by the First Nation School Board (FNSB); and
  - 19 are operated by Yukon Education (Department of Education), with local oversight provided by elected school councils.
- In November 2022 the Whistle Bend Elementary School Council was established.
- The Association of Yukon School Councils, Boards and Committees (AYSCBC) is the non-profit association of school councils in the Yukon. 16 school councils are currently members of AYSCBC. The 3 Catholic school councils are represented by the Catholic Education Association of Yukon (CEAY).
- The Education Act governs how school boards are created, how schools can be added to the education area of a board, and outlines a board's powers and duties.
- The choice of whether or not any particular school is governed by a school board is decided by that school community's electors.
- In spring 2020, the government and the CSFY settled a longstanding lawsuit relating to the roles and responsibilities of the CSFY as a School Board, and there is now greater clarity about the significant authority and responsibilities that the CSFY trustees have over the schools that the Board operates.
- School Board powers under the Education Act include:
  - Operating the schools in its education area.
  - Selection of all school staff; including principals and teachers, as well as dismissal, discipline, transfer, promotion and demotion; subject to the Act and any applicable collective agreement.

# Session Briefing Note

**Spring Session 2023**

## School Governance and Associations

Education

- Setting the calendars for schools they operate.
- Providing educational programs, including locally developed courses, and establishing policies for the administration, management and operation of its schools.
- Making agreements with the Government of Canada, a Yukon First Nation, any agency of the Government of Canada, the government or agent of any other jurisdiction, another School Board, or with a department or agency of the Government of Yukon respecting the provision or joint provision and operation of services.
- Managing the funds and financials that are approved by the Minister.
- Creating a parent advisory group for a school.
- School Council roles and responsibilities under the *Education Act* include:
  - Providing advice to the Minister on their school programs.
  - Seeking parent input on their school rules.
  - Approving school rules objectives, priorities and courses of study from school administration.
- A committee made up of representatives from the Department of Education, CEAY, Yukon First Nations Education Directorate, and AYSCBC developed a 'Resource Tool,' which launched in December 2020. It includes detailed information about the roles and responsibilities of School Councils, the Department of Education, and Yukon First Nations in the operation of schools and the Yukon education system.
- Honoraria rates for school council members and school board trustees, unchanged since 1991, were increased as of the 2020-21 school year.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**02/27/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Yukon School Food Programs**Education

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**Value:**

- Good nutrition is vital to the mental and physical health of all students and increases the learning potential of each student.

**Recommended response:**

- Currently, all Yukon schools provide some level of food service for students.
- We are working with our government and non-government partners through the Yukon Future of School Food Programs working group to explore the steps needed to strengthen food programs for Yukon students.
- We are also engaging with federal officials on this initiative.
- In the 2023-24 budget we are happy to announce an investment of \$500,000 for food in the schools. I look forward to the work on the next steps by the department.
- Currently, the Yukon government provides Yukon Food for Learning Association (YFFLA) with \$137,000 annually. Funding comes from two Departments (\$115,000 from HSS and \$22,000 from the Department of Education).

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Government of Canada is exploring options for building a pan-Canadian School Food Policy that will help guide the expansion of school food programs in Canada.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Yukon School Food Programs****Education**

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- In January, 2022, the Yukon Food for Learning Association approached the Department of Education about creating a steering committee on the future of Yukon school food programs.
- On March 10, 2022, the Third Party introduced a motion that the department review its food policy.

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**Background:**

- Current federal mandate letters for Minister Bibeau and Minister Gould (Minister of Agriculture and Agri-Food and Minister of Families, Children and Social Development respectively) outline how each will work together with provinces, territories, municipalities, Indigenous partners and stakeholders to develop a National Food School Policy and to work toward a national school nutritious meal program.
- On November 8, 2022, Education and federal officials met as part of the consultations to discuss potential policy scope, the Yukon's interest, timelines and key opportunities and concerns. Yukon officials indicated a strong interest in a pan-Canadian School Food Policy and flagged the following areas for more discussion:
  - Ensuring equity for rural schools
  - Clarification and common understanding of what would be included in a pan-Canadian policy (Education is the jurisdiction of provinces/territories)
  - Infrastructure
  - Federal funding
  - Capacity to implement a program
- The Yukon Future of Yukon School Food Programs working group was started in January 2022 to discuss and explore ways forward, and consists of members from:
  - The Department of Education
  - The Department of Health and Social Services
  - The Yukon Food for Learning Association (YFFLA)
  - Yukon First Nations Education Directorate
- IRP Consulting was hired to create a report to:
  - Understand the current state of Yukon school Food programs
  - Identify overlaps and gaps in services and propose solutions, and

# Session Briefing Note

# Spring Session 2023

## Yukon School Food Programs

## Education

- Explore what would have to happen to implement a universal school food program in the Yukon
- The Yukon government currently provides Yukon Food for Learning Association \$137,000 annually (\$22K Education and \$115K HSS) to support food programs
- The Yukon First Nation Education Directorate receives Jordan's Principle funding from the Federal government to administer a number of nutrition programs for Indigenous students in Yukon Public Schools. Where school kitchens in these schools lack capacity for meal preparation, food is prepared in a commercial kitchen off-site and then delivered to the school.
- Porter Creek Secondary School, St. Francis of Assisi, F.H Collins, and CSSC Mercier all have commercial kitchens. (All schools have some capacity to deliver foods and nutrition programs to students through smaller kitchens or Home Ec rooms)
- The commercial kitchens at Porter Creek Secondary School and CSSC Mercier are the only ones that are made available through special request for user groups to access through the Joint Use Agreement with the City of Whitehorse.
- Upgrading current infrastructure to meet commercial kitchen standards is a complex process that would involve extensive design and planning.
- On March 7, 2023, Premier Pillai announced a \$500,000 investment in the Yukon Food in Schools Program.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**4/19/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Private Schools in Yukon**Education

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**Value:**

- The Education Act allows for a variety of learning environments, including private schools, to suit individual students' needs.

**Recommended response:**

- The Education Act defines a private school as, “a school, including a school operated by a religious denomination, other than a school operated by the Minister or a School Board, that offers educational programs during school days to school-age children.
- Private schools may operate in Yukon if they meet the requirements of section 29 of the Education Act and the Private Schools Regulations.
- There are currently two private schools operating in Yukon: the Yukon Montessori School (Grades 1 to 7) and the Yukon Wild School (Grades Junior Kindergarten to 7).
- Private schools are required to:
  - Provide courses of study that meet the goals and objectives established by guidelines approved by the Minister.
  - Agree to regular evaluation and monitoring as determined by the Minister;
  - Meet all local and territorial health, safety, and building standards; and
  - Meet standards of student achievement, as measured by achievement testing, comparable to those of schools operated by the Minister or a School Board.
- Through the Aurora Virtual School the Department of Education works with private schools to assess student achievement.
- I am currently working with department officials to ensure there is a robust evaluation and monitoring framework in place.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Private Schools in Yukon**Education

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**Additional response – private schools and IEPs:**

- Private schools charge fees for students to access programs and services offered by the school.
- The Yukon Education Act speaks to the right of students to receive an educational program appropriate to their needs, and to receive an educational program outlined in an IEP when they are in need of special education programs.
- However, the Act speaks to students attending a school operated by the Minister or a school board. The Department of Education does not operate or manage private schools, nor does it provide staffing or funding to private schools.
- Further, the programming at private schools is the responsibility of the school and not the department.
- As such, the Department of Education is not responsible for providing support to students attending private schools, either in the Yukon or outside of the Yukon.

**Additional response - cannabis dispensary licensing:**

- I understand a recent applicant for a cannabis dispensary license is seeking a judicial review over a decision by the City of Whitehorse on a license to a cannabis dispensary. I will not be commenting on this matter as it is before the courts.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Minister has a role in approving, monitoring and evaluating private schools.
  - A parent of a student attending the Yukon Wild School has requested EA support for the student.
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# **Session Briefing Note**

## **Private Schools in Yukon**

# **Spring Session 2023**

## **Education**

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### **Background:**

- Under the Education Act ("the Act"), private schools may operate in Yukon if they meet the requirements of s. 29 of the Act and the requirements of the Private Schools Regulations.
- Application Process
  - An application for registration and accreditation as a private school needs to be submitted at least four months before the anticipated opening date of the school.
  - As per subsection 1 of the regulations, the application for registration shall include:
    - a) the names of the owners or operators of the school,
    - b) the name of the school,
    - c) the location of the school,
    - d) proof of compliance with all municipal and zoning bylaws, and all applicable municipal and territorial health, safety and building standards requirements,
    - e) procedures for achievement testing for the students,
    - f) written consent of the owner or operator to such evaluations of the school as may be required by the Minister, and
    - g) such further information as may be required by the Minister under the Act.
  - As per subsection 2 of the regulations, the application for accreditation shall include:
    - a) the information required in an application for registration under subsection 1, and
    - b) a list of the proposed instructional staff and proof that each instructor meets the certification requirements outlined in the Teacher Qualification Regulations.



# Session Briefing Note

# Spring Session 2023

## Private Schools in Yukon

## Education

- The Minister of Education is responsible for approving an application for registration or accreditation of a private school, and for regularly monitoring and evaluating the school.
- The Act states that no grants or contributions shall be made to a private school by the Minister, the Commissioner in Executive Council, a School Board or a Council.
- Under the Education Act, only students at government-run schools, including those operated and managed by a school board, are entitled to IEP programming.
- In March 2023 an applicant for a Cannabis licence sought a judicial review of a decision by the City of Whitehorse not to grant a licence because the proposed store was within 150 metres of a school.
- The applicant has argued that Montessori is a daycare and is not registered as a school.
- The department is following up with Montessori to ensure its registration is up to date.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**4/4/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Collaboration with Yukon First Nations - Yukon Wide Initiatives**  
**Education**

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**Value:**

- We are working with Yukon First Nations to ensure that all schools meet the needs of Yukon First Nation students, and to offer all students opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.

**Recommended response:**

- Recommendation 89 of the 2019 audit states that the department should complete and implement its policy to collaborate with Yukon First Nations to meet the Education Act's requirements.
- In February 2022 department officials and members of the First Nations Education Commission finalized the Yukon First Nations Education Collaboration Framework.
- We work with Yukon First Nations:
  - On a government-to-government basis;
  - At the community level, on education for their citizens and on their Traditional Territory; and
  - Collectively, at the Yukon-wide level with:
    - all Yukon First Nation governments and the Council of Yukon First Nations, including through the Yukon Forum;
    - the Yukon Native Language Centre;
    - the Chiefs Committee on Education;
    - the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate;
    - the First Nations Education Commission;
    - the First Nation School Board; and
    - the data sharing working group.

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Collaboration with Yukon First Nations - Yukon Wide Initiatives  
Education**

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- We will continue to work in partnership with First Nation governments to improve educational outcomes for students through:
  - Community-level Education Agreements;
  - The Joint Education Action Plan;
  - Responding to the 2019 audit, including the work to reimagine inclusive and special education;
  - A Memorandum of Understanding and Transfer Payment Agreement with the Yukon Native Language Centre;
  - Implementing the Joint Collaboration Framework Policy, which outlines how the department and Yukon First Nations will collaborate to address their joint education priorities; and
  - Other initiatives like the Indigenous Academy at FH Collins.

**Additional response:**

- As of the start of the 2022-23 school year eight schools across the Yukon are being operated by the First Nation School Board, and as of the start of the 2023-24 school year, this will grow to 11 schools.
- This is a historic step where Yukon First Nations and their citizens reclaim greater responsibility for the administration and management of education programs for students in their communities – a path that started 50 years ago, on the foundation of *Together Today for our Children Tomorrow*.
- It is also an example of effective collaboration between Yukon First Nations and the Government of Yukon to advance reconciliation, support First Nations students, and ensure all Yukon students benefit from learning about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.

## **Session Briefing Note**

## **Spring Session 2023**

### **Collaboration with Yukon First Nations - Yukon Wide Initiatives Education**

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- We recognize the value the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate adds in its administrative role for the Chief's Committee on Education and the First Nations Education Commission, and we will continue to combine our efforts to meet the needs of Yukon First Nation students.
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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The 2019 audit from the Auditor General of Canada found that the Department of Education has not done enough to collaborate with Yukon First Nations. During the Public Accounts hearing in January 2022, the Chief's Committee on Education said Education needs to collaborate more effectively.
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#### **Background:**

- In 2019, the Office of the Auditor General of Canada recommended that the Department of Education complete and implement its policy to collaborate with Yukon First Nations as well as a strategic action plan with specific, measurable actions and timelines to support its work with Yukon First Nations.
  - The YFN Education Collaborative Framework was developed in partnership between Department of Education officials and the members of the First Nations Education Commission.
  - The Collaboration Framework is organized with the same priority areas identified and agreed to in the Joint Education Action Plan – Yukon First Nations Cultures and Languages, Authority, Control and Responsibility, Sustainability, Supports and Success and Closing the Academic Achievement Gap, including Data and Student Information.
  - The Collaboration Framework includes opportunities for collaboration, description and timelines.
  - Next steps for implementation include ensuring all department staff are aware and understand the purpose for the Collaboration Framework, what their role is and what implementation looks like.
  - There are many ways to implement the Collaboration Framework, such as:
    - The work we do with the Yukon Native Language Centre to support the revitalization of Yukon First Nation languages in Yukon;
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**Spring Session 2023**

**Collaboration with Yukon First Nations - Yukon Wide Initiatives**  
**Education**

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- Negotiating and implementing joint priorities in Education Agreements with Yukon First Nations;
  - Implementing 17.7 provisions under the TH Self-government Agreement,
  - Ensuring all students have opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nation language, culture and traditions in Yukon schools;
  - Supporting the First Nation School Board and schools operating under the First Nation School Board;
  - Working with Yukon First Nations to build resources for teachers to support their work to bring First Nation ways of knowing, doing and being into their lessons;
  - Developing a Student Outcome Strategy; and
  - Implementing the Data Sharing MOU.
- The department will work with the First Nations Education Commission to determine the best way to track the implementation of the Collaboration Framework and reporting back.

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Collaboration with Yukon First Nations - Yukon Wide Initiatives**  
Education



**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**03/08/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Education Agreements****Education**

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**Value:**

- We're working with First Nations and educational partners to improve educational programs, services and outcomes for all Yukon students.

**Recommended response:**

- Yukon First Nation governments are essential partners in supporting First Nations students and in teaching all Yukon students about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.
- We will continue to work with individual Yukon First Nation governments on community-level education and funding agreements to improve educational outcomes for their citizens and learners on their traditional territories at local schools.
- The Government of Yukon allocates \$1.5 million for Yukon First Nation governments to use toward joint education priorities at the community level, and we are working to renew agreements that are expiring in 2023.

**Additional response:**

- This community-level collaboration reflects our government-to-government relationships and commitment to reconciliation.
- It also reflects our commitment to working closely with Yukon First Nations to support First Nations students and respond to the recommendations from the 2019 audit and the priorities under the Joint Education Action Plan.

## Session Briefing Note

## Spring Session 2023

### Education Agreements

### Education

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- Funding that will flow for the Yukon First School Board is separate and distinct from the funds designated for Education Agreements.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2019 audit found that the Department of Education has not done enough to collaborate with Yukon First Nations. The Chiefs Committee on Education said Education needs to collaborate more effectively during the Public Accounts hearing in January 2022.

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#### Background:

- The formula for allocating the total \$1.5M funding is a base amount of \$50,000 per Yukon First Nation government plus an additional allocation of \$600 per self-identified student.
- We currently have education agreements with nine Yukon First Nations. Officials from the Department of Education have been meeting with Yukon First Nation officials to discuss government-to-government education priorities.
- Throughout the winter and spring of 2022, the Minister, Deputy Minister and ADM of First Nations Initiatives met with many First Nation Chiefs to discuss joint priorities and Education Agreements.
- There are regular meetings with each Yukon First Nation throughout the year and the ADM of First Nation Initiatives is available when any concerns or questions come up.

#### Other examples of local collaboration:

We have worked collaboratively with Yukon First Nations on a number of programs, units, camps, and resources for Yukon schools, including:

- Dooli: traditional knowledge resources with the Northern Tutchone nations for schools in Pelly Crossing, Mayo and Carmacks and teacher training.
- External credits with Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in: First Fish, First Hunt and Moose Hunt as part of their 17.7 education agreement.



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Education Agreements****Education**

- Model partnerships like the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations Southern Tutchone Bi-Cultural Program, and the Vuntut Gwitchin First Nation Old Crow Experiential Education Project.
- Spring culture and trapping camps for Chief Zzeh Gittlit School with the Vuntut Gwitchin Government, for Kluane Lake School with Kluane First Nation, etc.
- Carcross/Tagish First Nation and Ghùch Tlâ School established curriculum on first fish, hunt or trapping.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****02/02/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****First Nation Programming in Schools**Education

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**Value:**

- We want to ensure that all Yukon schools are meeting the needs of Yukon First Nations students and offer all students opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nations' ways of knowing, doing and being.

**Recommended response:**

- Culturally inclusive and welcoming learning environments help to support student success at school.
- The Yukon's Kindergarten to Grade 12 curriculum is localized to reflect Yukon First Nations' ways of knowing, doing and being.
- Yukon schools also work with the Cultural Inclusion Standards in all Yukon Schools, developed by the First Nations Education Commission.
- We continue to work with Yukon First Nations on an ongoing basis to develop additional materials, resources and supports for culturally inclusive school programming and learning about Yukon First Nations.

**Additional response:**

- Ensuring Yukon educators have the professional learning opportunities and resources they need to include this learning in their class lessons is a priority for the department and key to successfully delivering the redesigned curriculum.
- Resources sent to schools are accompanied with information on how to localize the resource to reflect Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing, and being.
- The First Nation School Board will undoubtedly show us new and culturally rich ways to deliver the K-12 curriculum and programming

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****First Nation Programming in Schools****Education**

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that can be used in all Yukon schools.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Office of the Auditor General of Canada's 2019 audit report recommended that the department do more to support the inclusion of Yukon First Nation cultures and languages in schools.

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**Background:**

- Recommendation #109 from the 2019 audit: "The Department of Education should determine the human resources and training required to develop sufficient classroom support and materials to help teachers implement the new curriculum as it pertains to Yukon First Nations culture and languages."
- The First Nations Initiatives branch and the Curriculum and Assessment unit have worked with Yukon First Nations to develop curriculum materials and deliver training and support to Yukon educators relating to how students learn about Yukon First Nations cultures, languages, and histories, such as:
  - New grade 5 unit about residential schools (currently field testing); and
  - Draft sample units for K-12 educators, integrating Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.
- The Cultural Inclusion Standards in all Yukon Schools are being integrated into School Growth Plans.
  - They were developed at the 2016 Yukon First Nation Education Summit, and approved by the First Nation Education Commission (FNEC) in April 2016 and have been introduced to school principals. School principals participated in discussions and planning for the standards at the 2017 Yukon First Nation Education Summit.
- FNEC has worked with the department over the past few years on several initiatives related to the Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP), including these standards.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****First Nation Programming in Schools**

Education

- In September 2021, a new Indigenous Academy started operating out of FH Collins Secondary – a cooperative effort between the school, school council, First Nations, and the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate.
- The Academy is based on a similar program from School District 23 in British Columbia and is a "learning community" where several core subjects are taught through a primarily Indigenous worldview with wrap-around supports provided for students.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****02/02/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****First Nations Initiatives Branch****Education**

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**Value:**

- We are working with Yukon First Nations to ensure that schools meet the needs of Yukon First Nation students and offer all students opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.

**Recommended response:**

- We took action on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Call to Action #62, which calls upon governments to establish positions at the assistant deputy minister level, or higher, dedicated to Indigenous content in education.
- In 2019, the Department of Education worked with the Chiefs Committee on Education to establish this position and agreed to review the duties of the position in the context of how the Department of Education works with Yukon First Nations on joint education priorities.
- Over the past year, the Department of Education worked with the Chiefs Committee on Education to establish a working group with representatives from Yukon government, individual Yukon First Nation governments and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate to undertake a review of the duties and identify ways to collaborate on shared priorities assigned to the ADM position.
- The First Nations Initiatives branch continues to foster effective partnerships with Yukon First Nations to support Yukon-wide and community-specific joint education priorities.
- The branch has worked to clarify its mandate and evaluate services provided. This work resulted in establishing a position focused solely on Yukon First Nations language education.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****First Nations Initiatives Branch****Education**

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- During the Public Accounts hearings in January 2022, the Chief's Committee on Education raised concerns about progress on 2019 audit recommendations and involvement in plans that inform the work of Assistant Deputy Ministers within the Department.

**Background:**

- The First Nations Programs and Partnerships unit (now the First Nation Initiatives Branch) was created in 2006.
- The First Nations Initiatives Branch was established in June 2019 and has responsibilities relating to:
  - First Nations education in Yukon schools;
  - Yukon First Nations language programming in Yukon schools;
  - Development of curriculum and resource materials and training; and
  - Developing partnerships with Yukon First Nations (Yukon First Nations governments, Council of Yukon First Nations, Yukon Native Language Center, Chiefs Committee on Education, Yukon First Nations Education Directorate, First Nations Education Commission, First Nation School Board, etc.).
- An acting ADM is in place until June 30, 2023, to continue to support the work of the First Nation Initiatives Branch and allow time for the Department of Education and the Chiefs Committee on Education to complete a review of the duties assigned to this position and recruit.
- Any resulting changes to the branch's mandate and services will be shared as they are finalized, including with Yukon First Nations.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****2/2/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **JEAP Implementation and Agreement Renewal**

Education

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#### **Value:**

- We want to ensure that Yukon schools are meeting the needs of Yukon First Nations students and offering all students opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being in all Yukon schools.

#### **Recommended response:**

- As per the 2019 audit recommendations, we continue to collaborate with Yukon First Nations to implement actions that support the priorities of the Joint Education Action Plan 2014-2024.
- The four priority areas in the Joint Education Action Plan, or JEAP, remain relevant, and they will continue to be prioritized and addressed through collective and community-level agreements. Those priority areas are:
  - K-12 Culture and Language;
  - Authority, Control and Responsibility;
  - Sustainability, Supports and Success; and
  - Closing the Academic Achievement Gap.
- The Government of Yukon is interested in continuing with the work from the JEAP, to which all Yukon First Nations and Canada are partners.

#### **Additional response:**

- The establishment of the First Nation School Board and eight, soon to be eleven, schools being operated by the First Nation School Board is

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****JEAP Implementation and Agreement Renewal**Education

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a key example of Yukon First Nations reclaiming authority and control over education, a key commitment of JEAP.

- We continue to provide \$735,000 in funding to implement JEAP and related collective education priorities and welcome conversations on how to best resource and advance priorities.
- We continue to work with Yukon First Nations on a government-to-government basis at the political level through Yukon Forum and joint priorities for education and at the community-level to address education priorities in their Traditional Territory, often through an Education Agreement.
- We are also working with Yukon First Nations collectively at the Yukon-wide level through the Council of Yukon First Nations, the Yukon Native Language Centre, the Chiefs Committee on Education, the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and the First Nations Education Commission.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The 2019 audit recommended that the Department of Education should meet regularly with Yukon First Nations to assess the status of the Joint Education Action Plan's initiatives and determine how and when to complete those that remain.

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**Background:**

- As of 2019-20, the government allocated an additional \$300,000 per year to implement the education initiatives set out in the JEAP.
- We combined the two previous Transfer Payment Agreements we had with CYFN (one for Education Initiatives, one for FNEC) and added more resources for



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****JEAP Implementation and Agreement Renewal****Education**

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JEAP for a one-year term agreement for \$735,000 (up from \$435,000 combined annual amount from the two previous 3-year agreements). This now flows to YFNED as per CCOE and CYFN request, instead of CYFN.

- Senior Officials agree that the four priority areas in the JEAP should continue to be pursued through collective and community level agreements and initiatives.
- Work continues in this regard, for example:
  - Signed Agreement Respecting Education and the Establishment of a First Nation School Board in Yukon with 10 Yukon First Nations in March 2021.
  - Signed three-year Transfer Payment Agreements with all 14 Yukon First Nations, allocating over \$1.5 million among the 14 Yukon First Nations.
  - Signed a Memorandum of Understanding – Data Working Group in February 2020 with the Chiefs Committee on Education to collaborate and establish arrangements to enable and expedite the sharing of Yukon first Nation student aggregated data for the purpose of improving the delivery of education programs and improving student outcomes.
  - Increased funding in 2021 to Council for Yukon First Nations for the Yukon Native Language Center, to support language revitalization and planning for more First Nation Language teacher training.

Student performance data reporting

- The department has established a Data Working Group (with YFN representation) and has an approved Data Sharing MOU with the CYFN and CCOE technical staff to allow for the sharing of aggregated YFN student performance data, and a role for YFNs in the review and quality assurance process for such data.
- In the past, there have been issues in producing relevant reports on Yukon First Nations student performance data and sharing this data with Yukon First Nations.
- To address these issues and more effectively support Yukon First Nations data requests, the department has developed a data analysis system that can more appropriately generate Yukon First Nation specific reports.
- Implementation of the new ATIPP Act allows the department to enter into formal Information Sharing Agreements Yukon First Nation governments, which will make it easier to share student information (including personal information) with Yukon First Nations.

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**JEAP Implementation and Agreement Renewal**

Education

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- We have published the 2019-20 How Are We Doing (HAWD) Report and shared the HAWD 2020-21 draft with Yukon First Nations and are waiting for their feedback. We have also shared the first draft of the HAWD 2021-22 version, as committed to in the MOU.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2/28/2023**

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Language, Culture and Heritage Revitalization in Yukon Public Schools**

Education

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**Yukon Native Language Centre – First Nation Language Programs: refer to TAB FN09**

**Value:**

- Safer, healthier and thriving communities are inherently linked to re-building First Nation identity and connection to heritage. We also need to focus on leadership, education and training programs that are grounded in culture.

**Recommended response:**

- Yukon First Nation languages are in critical condition with a number of dialects down to only a handful of speakers.
- The Department of Education is working with individual Yukon First Nations regarding bilateral government-to-government Education Agreements, which include discussions on allocations for indigenizing education and language, culture and heritage programming in schools.
- In 2023-24 the Yukon government is providing more than \$1.19 million to the Yukon Native Language Centre, part of which is to support planning for more First Nations language teacher training.

**Additional response:**

- A specific priority for the Government of Yukon is to work towards a shared commitment with Yukon First Nations and the Government of Canada to address and take meaningful steps to revitalize Yukon First Nations languages, culture, and heritage.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Language, Culture and Heritage Revitalization in Yukon Public Schools**  
**Education**

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- The Yukon Strategy on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirit+ People includes a foundational value: “Culture, Language, Spirituality and Relationship with the Land”, which guides our work in this area.
- The Government of Yukon is interested in continuing with the work from the Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP), to which all Yukon First Nations and Canada are partners, as well as advancing specific funding conversations with Yukon First Nations and Canada, on how to advance language, culture and heritage priorities in public school settings.
- The Yukon government continues to explore other options for sharing existing capacity and resources for Yukon First Nation language programming with Yukon First Nations governments to support their language revitalization initiatives, and to meet the department’s obligation to provide Aboriginal language instruction to Yukon students.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Minister is meeting with each Yukon First Nation to discuss how they would like to be engaged about funding for language, culture and heritage and conversations with federal ministers in Ottawa.

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**Background:**

- The Department is having distinct funding conversations related to Indigenous education, and will develop a funding strategy to address the recommendations, objectives and requirements (within the Minister's responsibility under the Education Act) of the:
  - Joint Education Action Plan,
  - Collaboration Framework,

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Language, Culture and Heritage Revitalization in Yukon Public Schools****Education**

- Education Agreements with Yukon First Nations, and
- Yukon First Nations Education Directorate,
- The Council of Ministers of Education of Canada (CMEC) met in July, 2022. At this meeting Ministers discussed the “Framework for the CMEC Indigenous Education Plan, 2023-27. This framework was designed to ensure CMEC's Indigenous Education Plan continues to reflect CMEC members' respective commitments to advance progress on the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action.
- The Framework also seeks to support provincial and territorial education systems to recognize the historical impacts and unique cultures, and advance truth, reconciliation, and success for Indigenous students.
- The Government of Yukon transferred full administration and resources of the Yukon Native Language Centre to the Council of Yukon First Nations in 2018, for their important work to train language teachers and revitalize First Nations languages.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****2/27/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

## **Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada**

Education

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### **Value:**

- Residential schools are part of Canada's shared history, and we acknowledge the impacts this had on Yukon First Nations and all First Nations peoples in Canada.

### **Recommended response:**

- The Department of Education's role in Truth and Reconciliation is vital, and we are taking this responsibility seriously as we stand as allies to support Truth and Reconciliation initiatives across all Yukon schools and their communities.
- September 26th to 30th was Truth and Reconciliation week. Schools across the territory organized activities for staff, students and families to honour last years' theme: "remembering the children".
- The Government of Yukon observes September 30th as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation, also known as Orange Shirt Day, and schools are closed across the territory.
- This statutory holiday is an important day to honour the survivors, families and communities impacted by residential schools in Canada and the continued trauma faced by Indigenous communities throughout the country.

### **Additional response:**

- The department's work to address the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission includes establishing a more inclusive public education system in Yukon, ensuring schools meet the needs of

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada****Education**

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Yukon First Nation students, and offering all students opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.

- Establishing the Yukon First Nation School Board is a major step in advancing reconciliation – a path that started 50 years ago with the historic document, championed by Yukon First Nations Chiefs: Together Today for our Children Tomorrow.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- In 2015, The Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada released its final report calling for greater partnerships with First Nations and more culturally appropriate curricula and curricula about residential schools.
- Yukon observes September 30 as the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation.

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**Background:**

- The department's work in this area includes:
  - In 2021, we reached a landmark framework agreement with the Chiefs of 10 Yukon First Nations governments to establish a Yukon First Nation School Board.
  - Starting the 2022-2023 school year with eight schools operating under the First Nation School Board.
  - Curriculum developed on Indian Residential School working with YFN and knowledge keepers for grade 10 social studies.
  - The Joint Education and Action Plan.
  - Education Agreements with all 14 Yukon First Nation governments are either signed or in process of signing. This includes financial compensation (\$1.5 million total).
  - Cultural and language initiatives – First Nations Initiatives Unit (FNI)
  - Establishing the FNI - Department officials worked with the Council of Yukon First Nations and the Chiefs Committee on Education to establish an Assistant Deputy Minister of First Nations Initiatives.

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada**

Education

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- The Yukon's new school curriculum for K-12 includes Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being and perspectives in all subjects at all grade levels developed with Yukon First Nations.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**02/02/2023**

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****YFNED Programs and Services**Education

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**Value:**

- We want to ensure that all Yukon schools are meeting the needs of Yukon First Nations students and offering all students opportunities to learn about Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.

**Recommended response:**

- Our government is pleased to be working collaboratively with the Chiefs Committee on Education and the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate on the programs and services they are implementing to support First Nations students.
- The Yukon First Nation Education Directorate has received resources through Jordan's Principle to deliver important services that provide additional support to First Nations students in Yukon.
- Examples of programs include the Mobile Therapeutic Unit, Nutritional Programs, Early Childhood Education and Maternal Child Health, Cultural Connections, Transportation and Yukon First Nation Education Advocates.

**Additional response:**

- The federal government provides funding through Jordan's Principle for First Nations children who need support or services that are not offered through regular funding processes.
- We appreciate the work and support of the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and recognize the valuable supports they can offer to First Nations students and families, and we share their enthusiasm for the positive difference we can make together.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****YFNED Programs and Services****Education**

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- CYFN, the Yukon First Nations Education Directorate and Yukon First Nations are working on a number of programs to support First Nation students that have direct connections to Yukon schools, such as food programs, access to specialized assessments and additional counselling supports.

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**Background:**

- The Jordan's Principle initiative aims to make sure First Nations children can access all public services in a way that reflects their distinct cultural needs and takes full account of the historical disadvantage linked to colonization.
- This funding may be awarded to cultural and emotional support in school, assessments, technology and communication devices, and transportation.
- Jordan's Principle program funding is given to programs that are outside of the Department of Education's mandated responsibilities.
- Created by the Chiefs Committee on Education (CCOE) in 2020, the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate (YFNED) is a stand-alone entity, and most of, but not all, Jordan's Principle funding to the Yukon now flows to the Directorate. The Directorate has received funding for several Initiatives to form a wraparound service to Yukon First Nations.
- The YFNED receives Jordan's Principle funding for several programs:
  - Mobile Therapeutic Unit: Indigenous allied health services for all Yukon communities, cultural mental wellness services, speech and language pathology, occupational therapy, education psychology, optometry and audiology. This was launched in January 2021.
  - Nutritional Programs: Hot breakfast and lunch, traditional food and community feasts. This has been offered in rural First Nation communities, and in Whitehorse.
  - Early Childhood Education/Maternal Child Health: Early Child Visiting Program in four rural communities and Whitehorse. Vuntut Gwitchin, Ross River Dena Council, Selkirk First Nation and the First Nation of Nacho Nyäk Dun. Launched on April 1, 2021, and discussions with the department have begun.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****YFNED Programs and Services****Education**

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- Yukon First Nation Education Advocates: Aim to provide support and advocacy for individual Indigenous students, support culturally inclusive programming, work with school to improve the academic achievement of Indigenous students, increase a sense of belonging, self-respect and place in heritage for all Indigenous students and connect Indigenous students to services and supports and ensure recommended services and supports are provided.
- Cultural Connections: School-wide cultural programming is being developed.
- Transportation: Van, driver and on-board emotional support.
- Currently, we have no Educational Assistants in the school system funded by Jordan's Principle; any Educational Assistants requests funded through Jordan's Principle will be addressed on a case-by-case basis.
- We are working with the CCOE and YFNED to establish a joint action plan that will clarify how we will collaborate on joint education priorities.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****02/02/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****YNLC - First Nation Language Programs****Education**

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**Language, Culture and Heritage Revitalization in Yukon Public Schools:  
refer to TAB FN06**

**Value:**

- We are committed to supporting the revitalization of First Nations Languages through language learning programs.

**Recommended response:**

- We continue to work closely with the Yukon Native Language Centre and Council of Yukon First Nations on programs that promote First Nations language learning, as well as supporting the revitalization of Yukon First Nation languages.
- The Government of Yukon provides the Yukon Native Language Centre, or YNLC, with approximately \$1.19 million each year, part of which is to support planning for more First Nations language teacher training.
- We continue to offer First Nations language programs in Yukon schools, although there are a few language teacher vacancies due to the declining number of fluent and proficient language teachers.
- To support revitalizing Yukon First Nation languages and restoring First Nations' responsibility for their languages, the Government of Yukon transferred full authority and control of the Yukon Native Language Centre to the Council of Yukon First Nations in 2018.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The 2019 audit included recommendations relating to Aboriginal language instruction and policies in schools.
- Language revitalization was a topic in the 2022 PAC hearing.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****YNLC - First Nation Language Programs****Education**

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**Background:**

- CYFN conducted a review of Yukon First Nations (YFN) languages, which included the YNLC, to determine how to meet the urgent need to restore and revitalize First Nations languages in Yukon. The YNLC is now focusing on supporting First Nations community-based language initiatives, including creating fluent speakers.
- The Education Act requires the Minister of Education to employ YFN language teachers to provide language instruction in the schools; establish policies and guidelines on the amount of and timetabling for the instruction of YFN languages in the schools; and provide for the development of instructional materials for the teaching of YFN languages and the training of YFN language teachers.
- The department works to recruit certified candidates to fill vacant YFN Language Teacher positions, but faces challenges finding and recruiting certified and proficient YFN Language Teachers. There has been a decrease in fluent Yukon First Nation language instructors through retirement and few systemic supports for fluency development among learner-teachers.
- As of Sept 1, 2022, 31.59 FTEs are allocated for Yukon First Nation Language Teachers, and there are 7 positions out for recruitment as of January 24, 2023.
  - 2 of the vacancies are due to the language teachers participating in a secondment with a Yukon First Nation government and the Yukon Native Language Centre.
  - 3 of these positions have identified candidates that we are working with to complete their language fluency assessment.
  - 7 Yukon First Nation languages are being taught in 23 schools. There are well-established elementary and middle school programs but low student enrolment and retention after grade 7.
- In February 2021, the First Nations Education Commission passed a resolution for the Department of Education to work with the YNLC to support: YFN languages curriculum development, language teacher training, and language proficiency and fluency development. The resolution will help to guide the development of the YNLC's workplan.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****YNLC - First Nation Language Programs****Education**

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- The Department has re-established a Language Coordinator position within the First Nations Initiatives branch. This position will work with Yukon First Nations to support language revitalization and provide support and advice to Yukon First Nation Language Teachers to enhance delivery of First Nation language curriculum.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****02/27/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Yukon First Nation School Board****Education**

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**School Board Elections and Referendums: refer to TAB EP03****School Governance and Associations: refer to TAB EP04****Value:**

- The Government of Yukon, Chiefs Committee on Education and the First Nation School Board share the common goal of providing high quality and culturally appropriate education, based on an Indigenous worldview, for all Yukon students.

**Recommended response:**

- The First Nation School Board governs eight schools across the Yukon. This is a historic step for Yukon First Nations and their citizens.
- The First Nation School Board is enabling Yukon First Nations to reclaim greater responsibility for the administration and management of education programs for students in their communities.
- I would like to acknowledge and thank the Chiefs Committee on Education, the Interim Governance Committee, the officials of the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate and the First Nation School Board, who worked tirelessly to launch the school board in February 2022, and to ensure a successful start to the 2022-23 school year for schools and students moving to the school board.
- As Minister of Education, I will continue to collaborate with the Chiefs Committee on Education and the First Nation School Board trustees as I exercise my oversight authorities.
- I will also continue to work on a government-to-government basis with individual First Nations on their educational priorities for their citizens.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Yukon First Nation School Board****Education**

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**Additional response:**

- In February, four schools held referendums to join the First Nation School Board. Thank you to all school communities, councils, the First Nation School Board, and Elections Yukon for providing opportunities and holding conversations on the considerations to join the First Nation School Board. I am pleased to announce that the following three schools will be managed and operated by the First Nation School Board as of the start of the 2023-24 school year:
  - Eliza Van Bibber School, Pelly Crossing
  - Ghùch Tlâ Community School, Carcross
  - Kluane Lake School, Destruction Bay
- Other school communities that seek to join the First Nation School Board will have opportunities to do so in the future.
- The department meets regularly with officials of the First Nation School Board regarding supports and plans that go into operating schools.

**Additional response - Funding:**

- I am proud of our over \$35 million dollar agreement with the First Nation School Board.
- This significant 15-month agreement, runs until the end of the 2023-24 school year.
- The agreement supports the operations and maintenance of First Nation School Board schools, the organizational capacity of the board and the development of Yukon First Nation language and cultural educational programs that will benefit all schools operated by the Department of Education.
- This agreement is based on the same funding components and drivers as CSFY, with some differences for the uniqueness of the FNSB.



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Yukon First Nation School Board****Education**

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- Items such as remoteness, additional governance and administration requirements related to the number of schools, community committees and travel are unique to the FNSB.
- The FNSB has also been provided with discretionary funding in the amount of \$2.5M for student outcomes and Indigenization of the curriculum.
- The Department worked collaboratively with the FNSB to ensure they are set up for success, to address recommendations from the 2019 Auditor General's report and to advance priorities in the Joint Education Action Plan (JEAP)
- It is important to note that the JEAP is a tri-lateral agreement between Yukon Government, Yukon First Nations and Government of Canada – we are engaging with our partners as we continue this work.
- Resources are provided to school authorities to provide consistent service levels in the provisioning of K-12 education programs across Yukon, while also recognizing unique language and culture considerations.
- We also had an Interim Funding agreement in place to ensure a successful transition for the 2022-23 school year for \$13,094,188 that ended on March 31, 2023.
- This Interim Funding agreement represented base funding for school operations as well as funding for the new board's administration and costs associated with Indigenous recognition.
- Funding requirements for existing school-based budgets and administration may change as more schools join the First Nation School Board.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

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**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Yukon First Nation School Board****Education**

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- There will be considerable interest in how the First Nation School Board is operating the eight schools under its authority, and the impacts of this on all Yukon students.
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**Background:**

- The First Nation School Board held its first election November 2022, and now has 5 elected trustees: Shadelle Chambers, Erin Pauls, Dana Tizya-Tram, Jocelyn Joe-Strack and Gillian Staveley.
  - The following school communities voted in 2022 to have their school councils dissolved and replaced by the First Nation School Board (FNSB):
    - St. Elias Community School (Haines Junction);
    - Johnson Elementary and Watson Lake Secondary Schools (Watson Lake);
    - Ross River School;
    - Chief Zzeh Gittlit School (Old Crow);
    - Grey Mountain Primary and Takhini Elementary Schools (Whitehorse); and
    - Nelnah Bessie John School (Beaver Creek).
  - JV Clark School (Mayo) electors voted in 2022 to not have their school operated by the FNSB.
  - An Interim Funding agreement was in place to ensure a successful transition for the start of the 2022-23 school year. The total amount of this agreement was \$13,094,188 (to March 31, 2023) and represents base funding for school operations as well as funding for the new board's administration and costs associated with Indigenous recognition.
  - The interim funding agreement was found from within the Department's existing budget.
  - The department worked with the newly elected trustees on a final financial arrangement for the FNSB funding formula to create equitable funding between the school authorities and to establish consistent service levels in the provisioning of K-12 education programs.
  - We have a 15-month agreement that runs until June 30, 2024, in an amount of just over \$35 million which includes a combination of new money and reprofiling the existing budget to offset the funding requirements of the First Nation School Board.
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**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Yukon First Nation School Board****Education**

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- The Government has committed to this funding, through a Transfer Payment Agreement (TPA) The breakdown is as follows:
  - Operational support and Operations and Maintenance of 8 schools \$23.6M (same cost factors and drivers as CSFY with a minor difference for rural remoteness)
  - Board Governance and Administration of 8 schools for the period \$3.2M (same cost factors and drivers as CSFY with and additional amount to address requirements due to number of schools, travel requirements, remoteness and community committees)
  - Discretionary Grant: Indigenous recognition \$4.8M (calculated same as CSFY)
  - Discretionary Grant: One time funding for Governance of Community committees \$450k
  - Discretionary Grant: for student outcomes and indigenization of the curriculum in response to the 2019 Auditors General report \$3.125M
- Previous decisions of the interim committee will need to be confirmed by the trustees.
- All school staff continue to be Yukon government employees. They will retain membership in their union or bargaining association.
- An appointed Interim Governance Committee led the First Nation School Board through its first nine months of work from February 2022 to the school board trustee election in November 2022.
- The Interim Governance Committee was appointed from recommendations made by the Chiefs Committee on Education, and included: Dr. Alyce Johnson, Erin Pauls, Jocelyn Joe-Strack, Mark Wedge, Melanie Bennett, and Kirk Cameron.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****04/05/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Classroom Assessment Practices**Education

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**Value:**

- We provide all K-12 students a modern curriculum that follows best practices from across Canada and the world, and incorporates Yukon's context and Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.

**Recommended response:**

- Part of the Yukon's modernized school curriculum includes updated ways for teachers to assess and report on student learning.
- Changes to assessment and reporting are based on research and leading teaching practices that confirm students need to understand learning as a lifelong process. Educators involve parents and students in the learning process by using ongoing, meaningful feedback.
- Students in Grades 10 to 12 continue to receive percentage scores and transcripts for post-secondary school. Grade 12 students also receive percentage scores at the mid-point of their course for pre-admission to post-secondary schools.
- School authorities, Yukon Education, CSFY and the First Nation School Board, follow the same K-12 curriculum and assessment and reporting structure. However, how learning objectives are met and programming is delivered is flexible and may vary.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There continue to be varying reactions to Yukon's decision to adopt standards-based assessment, grading, and reporting.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Classroom Assessment Practices****Education**

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**Background:**

- Assessment changes are based on the collaborative work and recommendations of the Education Assessment Committee, a group of 40 Yukon educators and partners in education, who researched best practices in student-centered assessment and reporting to update reporting procedures and guidelines for Yukon schools.
- Assessment and reporting procedures and guidelines require teachers to collect evidence of student learning, evaluate achievement on the learning standards for each grade and subject, and provide descriptive feedback on students' strengths, areas for further development, and next steps for learning.
- The main changes to the student assessment and reporting procedures and guidelines are:
  - Moving from letter grades to proficiency levels for Grades 4-9, with a chart that schools can make available to show parents and caregivers how the proficiency levels correspond to letter grades.
  - Proficiency levels and descriptive feedback and comments provide parents and caregivers with more helpful information on their child's learning, so they know how their child is progressing in their learning and how they can help support that learning process.
  - Communicating student learning in report cards is based on the most recent and consistent demonstration of learning to best reflect students' understanding and skills.
  - Teaching students how to self-assess their strengths and areas for improvement for core competency skills in communication, thinking, and personal and social, are noted on their final report card.
- The Yukon student assessment matrix was updated in September 2022 to align with the Education Recovery plan.
- The updated matrix includes updated literacy assessments for both English and French Immersion students.
- The assessment matrix does not include formalized assessments completed by Student Support Services specialists.
- The main features of the modernized assessment and reporting guidelines and procedures are:
  - Flexibility to increase parent and student involvement in the learning process using ongoing, meaningful feedback in conversation with parents/students

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Classroom Assessment Practices**Education

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and examples of student work to show learning progress to parents and caregivers and students.

- o More informal communication options with parents.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****02/27/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Gender Identity and Health Curriculum****Education**

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**Value:**

- We want all students, staff and school community members to feel safe and welcome in Yukon schools.

**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon's curriculum includes age-appropriate learning standards on health, sexual orientation and gender identities.
- We work with educators, health experts and community members to ensure we are using the most up-to-date practices to create an inclusive school environment for all students.
- We are making every effort to ensure lessons and teaching practices promote inclusion and continue to review and update these on an ongoing basis.
- We appreciate a need for families to be aware of curriculum topics.
- We invite parents to discuss curriculum topics with their child's teacher or school principal.
- If anyone has feedback or concerns about a lesson being taught at their school, we encourage them to bring it to the attention of the teacher and school principal for a discussion.

**Additional response:**

- Teachers are provided with resources and professional learning about appropriate language and best practices to teach these learning standards inclusively.
- The Yukon's curriculum, resources and professional learning for teachers follow the department's Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy,

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Gender Identity and Health Curriculum****Education**

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which promotes appropriate, respectful behaviour for all students including 2SLGBTQIA+ students.

- A review of the SHARE (grade 4-7) resources, now called Better to Know (BTK) has been completed. The revised resources are available to teachers.
- We have implemented new training developed through work on the Safer School Action Plan in all schools to enhance student safety and raise awareness about appropriate adult behaviour.

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**Context – this may be an issue because:**

- Reviews and investigations on the Hidden Valley matter highlight opportunities to improve policies and procedures that increase student safety and inclusive learning environments.
- Questions on when the SOGI policy will be updated are expected.

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**Background:**

- Yukon government initiatives relate to gender identity and safety in schools. These include:
  - The 2SLGBTQIA+ Action Plan, which commits the Department of Education to updating the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy.
  - The Yukon Strategy on Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and Two-spirit+ People, which aims to address violence against Indigenous women, girls and Two-spirit+ people.
  - The Department of Education's current work to update its policies and processes on safe and caring schools.
  - The work of the Communities of Inquiry in response to the Review of Inclusive and Special Education and the Review on School Attendance, which are creating new definitions of Inclusive and Special Education.

Curriculum



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Gender Identity and Health Curriculum****Education**

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- Content related to sexual health begins in kindergarten, when students learn the proper name of body parts, including private parts.
- With younger students, sexual health topics focus on general health and safety. In later grades, this content expands to include content such as topics related to pregnancy, the prevention of sexually-transmitted infections, and overall healthy sexual decision making.
- Topics related to sexual identity begin in Grade 4 where students learn about the physical, emotional, and social changes that occur during puberty, including those involving sexuality and sexual identity.
- In grades 4-10, Physical and Health Education curriculum includes strategies for students to protect themselves and others from potential abuse, exploitation, and harm in a variety of settings.

Resources

- All schools with elementary grades were provided with the SHARE (now BTK) resource. Secondary schools (grades 8-12) were provided with the resource called "Better to Know".
- Body Parts and Safe Touch video and teaching resource for Grades K to 3 is available for use in Yukon Schools.

Professional learning

- The Departments of Education and Health and Social Services follow best practices in comprehensive sexual health education as taught by Options for Sexual Health (OPT BC) in Vancouver. Health and Social Services employs Certified Sexual Health Educators who have been trained through OPT BC. Many Yukon educators have received training for teaching classroom lessons from Certified Sexual Health Educators.
- Since September 2017, Education and Health and Social Services have held workshops at the majority of Yukon schools. Topics included:
  - (Better to Know, or BTK (previously SHARE);
  - Comprehensive sexual health curricular competencies for various elementary grade levels; and
  - Grade K-12 comprehensive health learning standards.
- We have organized and delivered professional development workshops open to all Yukon teachers on sexual health education in collaboration with Health and Social

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Gender Identity and Health Curriculum****Education**

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Services. We have also worked with Health and Social Services to deliver professional development workshops to the nursing community who are closely involved in K-12 education.

- Teachers most recently engaged in professional development on sexual health resources in January, 2023.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****3/15/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Graduation Program****Education**

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**Value:**

- Our goal is to ensure all Yukon students have the skills and knowledge that they need for their transition into higher education, training, or the workforce – whatever their path may be.

**Recommended response:**

- All Grade 10-12 students follow the BC Graduation Program and requirements, including writing the BC literacy and numeracy assessments.
- These assessments demonstrate overall skills in literacy and numeracy, rather than the student's proficiency in a specific course.
- All graduation assessments are now implemented.
- The Grade 10 Literacy, Grade 10 Numeracy, and Grade 12 Literacy, as well as the French Immersion and Francophone equivalent assessments, are offered several times within the school year.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Grade 12 literacy assessment was first implemented in November 2021.
- Questions may be asked about if there are differences between the graduation programs for Yukon public and private schools as well as between the school authorities – Yukon Education, CSFY or FNSB, and Wild School (private). There are no differences.

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**Background:**

- British Columbia Provincial Exams (BCPEs) and the Language Proficiency Index (LPI) have been phased out and replaced by a numeracy assessment and two literacy assessments: Grade 10 Numeracy (introduced June 2018); Grade 10

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Graduation Program****Education**

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Literacy (introduced in 2019-20 school year); and Grade 12 Literacy (first session was November 2021).

- Grade 10-12 classes continue to have ongoing assessments, such as in-class final projects, learning portfolios and exams. These are determined at the school level.
- The Graduation Program requires 80 credits, with a minimum of 16 at the Grade 12 level, and 28 elective course credits.
- No changes have been made to the requirements for the Adult Dogwood Diploma or Diplôme de fin d'études secondaires en Colombie-Britannique, both of which the Yukon follows.
- Recently, the BC Ministry of Education announced, starting in the 2023-24 school year, they will be implementing a new graduation requirement that requires all secondary students to complete Indigenous-focused coursework before they graduate from the K-12 system.
- The majority of Yukon schools are already meeting the new graduation requirements for Indigenous-focused coursework being introducing in BC for secondary students in the 2023-24 school year, and the department will ensure this is in place for all students for next year.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****02/02/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Value:**

- Literacy skills are a key component of student success, and we are committed to improving literacy proficiencies for Yukon students.

**Recommended Response:**

- Addressing student literacy needs is a complex task, and no single approach or resource program is a solution for the many factors that influence student literacy outcomes.
- The Department of Education is supportive of using multiple approaches to literacy instruction, including resources developed to support the research of the science of reading.
- We are also committed to using a variety of intervention tools that include Reading Recovery and Wilson to address learning needs.
- The Department of Education recently launched a Literacy Strategy Working group to develop culturally responsive literacy programming in schools.
- This working group is comprised of organizations passionate about literacy, including Department of Education officials, Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, Yukon Speech Language Pathology and Audiology Association, LDAY, Boreal Clinic (speech pathologist), Teachers, Administrators, and others.
- This working group will make research and data informed recommendations for a Yukon culturally responsive literacy strategy and have committed to meet in April, May and June in order to put forward recommendations this summer.

**Additional Responses:**

- We are providing training and support on new literacy resources to support literacy development.
- Part of this training and development plan is to support teachers in using assessments, gathering data to understand what is happening for their students and then using this data to inform instructional practices and measure success.
- As we recover from the pandemic, we have prioritized literacy, numeracy, social-emotional development and mental health.
- Schools are following the Yukon K-12 Education Recovery Plan, which outline key priorities including numeracy, literacy, and providing an inclusive environment for learning.
- We continue to assess student learning and are closely monitoring the impacts of pandemic on learning outcomes.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Yukon First Nations School board is using a different approach to literacy instruction as basis for improving literacy.
- Questions about Yukon's literacy approach have been raised in the Public Accounts hearing, a submission from Yukon Speech Language Pathology and Audiology Association, as well as in past budget debates.
- Yukon data indicate that literacy and numeracy proficiencies need improvement.

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**Background:**

Literacy and Curriculum

- The redesigned curriculum supports best practices in teaching and learning.

- To support implementation of Yukon's redesigned curriculum, consultants in the Curriculum and Assessment Unit developed Yukon's Balanced Literacy approach using current research.
- The program selected for intervention is dependent on the student's needs.
- Reading recovery is an intervention used in Yukon schools and Yukon data shows it is an effective method for many students.
- We have made some updates to current literacy assessments mandated for Yukon schools.
- The DART reading assessment has been replaced with Fountas and Pinnell assessments, a more updated assessment for literacy.
- The First Nation School Board has launched its own literacy plan, which includes the science of reading as the basis for improving literacy.
- We have just launched a "Yukon Culturally Responsive Literacy Strategy working group to develop a literacy strategy for Yukon schools in alignment with BC's curriculum.
- This working group is comprised of various parties, including Department of Education officials, Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, Yukon Speech Language Pathology and Audiology Association, LDAY, Boreal Clinic (speech pathologist), Teachers, Administrators, and others who are interested in supporting literacy. The Department of Education is actively recruiting Yukon First Nation members.
- The working group met on February 16th and is scheduled to meet April 12<sup>th</sup>, May 4<sup>th</sup> and June 1<sup>st</sup>.
- The group will provide research based and data informed recommendations for a Yukon Culturally responsive literacy strategy. They are expected to have recommendations by summer 2023 and an implementation plan within the next year.

### Yukon Speech Language Pathology and Audiology Association (YSLPAA)

- YSLPAA sent an email and various letters to different parties in education, including the Deputy Minister outlining concerns with respect to literacy approaches used in Yukon Schools.

# Session Briefing Note

## Literacy

# TAB CU04

## Spring Session 2023

### Education

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- YSLPAA expressed a desire to build relationships and discuss gaps in use of evidence-based practices as well as adoption of Right to Read report recommendations.
- Director, Curriculum and Assessment and Director, Student Support Services met with a representative of YSLPAA on September 8, 2022
- At this meeting,
  - We informed them that we were currently developing a terms of reference to launch a Culturally Responsive Literacy Strategy Working Group and promised to invite them to be a part of the working group.
  - We focused attention on utilizing Yukon data to inform next steps and the on importance of diverse perspectives and that no one model will work for all students.

### Tracking literacy progress

- The BOEHM and Early Years Evaluation (EYE) assessments provide data on student's literacy at primary levels.
- Aspen, the Student Information System that Yukon uses, allows teachers to upload all Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark Assessment results for each student.
- Any teacher attached to a student is able to see the multiple assessments that can be input into the system each year.
- The principal and any Learning Assistance Teacher that works with the student can also access these results. They can track the literacy and comprehension progress of a student over time.

### Assessments and data

- The Yukon conducts a number of assessments of students at each grade to help teachers and parents focus on ways to support student learning.
- Yukon-wide data and descriptions of assessments are on Yukon.ca.
- We assess reading and writing at key points during a student's education, including in Grades 4 and 7 through the Yukon Foundation Skills Assessments. In the past, these assessments were written late in the school year. They have now been moved to the fall of each school year so teachers can use the information from these assessments to make adjustments and provide supports to students who need it.
- At the high school level, students write the Grade 10 and Grade 12 Literacy Assessments.



## Session Briefing Note Literacy

**TAB CU04**  
**Spring Session 2023**  
Education

- Schools and teachers use these assessments to adjust learning approaches for students, to identify where specific supports are needed and to inform the focus of their school growth plan.

**Approved by:**

**Kelli Taylor**

**3/21/2023**

\_\_\_\_\_  
A/Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Student Data, Targets and Outcomes Strategy****Education**

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**Value:**

- We continue to work with Yukon First Nations and partners to monitor and improve student outcomes by identifying and analyzing root causes that can negatively impact a student's learning.

**Recommended response:**

- Many factors contribute to a student's success at school, including high-quality instruction, engaged learning and a student's support networks, both at and away from school.
- The Student Outcome Strategy will help us develop a deeper understanding of how we can best support Yukon students and make evidence-based decisions that will ensure every student in the territory has an opportunity to succeed.
- The department contracted IRP Consulting and engaged with Yukon First Nation governments on the initial development of draft student outcome statements. This phase is now complete.
- The next phase, which is underway, includes sharing the draft student outcome statements with our partners on the Advisory Committee on Yukon Education, teachers, students, families and other education partners.
- As part of this second phase, IRP Consulting will be hosting two virtual meetings for the public to share their thoughts, ideas, hopes and experiences on March 20<sup>th</sup> and 27<sup>th</sup>, 2023 – those that are interested to participate can contact [tosh@irpotential.com](mailto:tosh@irpotential.com).

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Student Data, Targets and Outcomes Strategy****Education**

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- By working collaboratively with Yukon First Nation governments, as well as our education partners, we will help sharpen our focus and target supports that will improve outcomes for all Yukon students.
- It is important that we take the time to do this foundational work in a meaningful way so that we are united in our collective understanding of the outcomes we want from Yukon's public education system.

**Additional response:**

- The Yukon-Wide and How Are We Doing student data reports support the Department of Education and our partners in a deeper understanding of what is happening with our students.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- In the 2019 audit, the Auditor General identified achievement gaps between rural and urban students, as well as Yukon First Nations and non-First Nations students.

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**Background**

- Recommendation #42 from the 2019 audit, states “*The Department of Education should develop and implement a strategy to address the long-standing gaps in student performance and improve student outcomes, particularly those of Yukon First Nations and rural students.*”
- In response, the Department of Education committed to “collaborate with Yukon First Nations governments... to develop and implement an outcome management improvement strategy for the Yukon education system.”
- The Yukon First Nation Education Commission (FNEC) provided a clear preference for the department to work on a government-to-government basis with individual First Nations.

Yukon-Wide Student Data Report

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Student Data, Targets and Outcomes Strategy****Education**

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- The Yukon-Wide Student Data report provides analysis reporting of student assessment and other important student data. It is published each March on Yukon.ca for the previous school year.
- The most recent report, using 2020-2021 data, was published in March 2022.

Data reporting

- The department has established a Data Working Group with Yukon First Nation (YFN) representation, and is co-chaired by the Department of Education and the First Nations Education Directorate. This Data Working Group is currently working on developing a data research agreement as identified in the CCOE priority action plan.
- As per the joint MOU between the Chiefs Committee on Education and the Department of Education, we have committed to providing yearly How Are We Doing reports, which focus on YFN student performance data.
- The department has provided YFNs with the 'How Are We Doing' reports for each year dating back to 2017-18. Phase one of the 2022-23 'How Are We Doing' draft report was provided to the Yukon First Nation Education Directorate for reviewing and approval.
- In the fall of 2022, schools received their 2021-2022 School Profile reports which provide an overview and analysis of the school's student assessment and enrolment.
- The department gathers and analyzes student assessment data throughout the school year. This information is provided to department staff and partners throughout the school year to support evidence-based decision making. This information is then summarized and collated into a Yukon Wide report and published the following March of the reports school year.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****03/15/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Teacher Professional Learning - PD Funding and Training**

Education

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**Value:**

- Department of Education supports ongoing and continuous professional learning opportunities and professional development, which are available to educators each year.

**Recommended response:**

- The Department of Education collaborates on several levels to support educators in their professional learning and growth.
- Department staff plan and provide professional learning networks and targeted professional learning to school-based staff on an ongoing basis.
- The Department provides \$475,000 in annual funding to the Yukon Association of Education Professionals to provide for training and development activities related to professional growth, curriculum implementation, and other priorities.
- The teacher evaluation process guides the ongoing performance of staff, promoting quality instruction and continuous improvement of professional practice through the promotion of individual learning plans.

**Additional response:**

- A Community of Inquiry stemming from the Review of Inclusive and Special Education is examining the approaches and opportunities for professional development in order to increase inclusive practices in Yukon classrooms and ensure a culturally based lens is applied.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Teacher Professional Learning - PD Funding and Training**Education

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Review of Inclusive and Special Education identified professional development needs to increase inclusive practices within the system.
- Questions may arise around educators losing professional learning opportunities because of lack of Teachers on Call (TOCs) and low operational capacity due to staff illness.

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**Background**

- Since 2014, professional learning relating to the new curriculum has been provided through in-service training, and professional networking and coaching to support professional learning in foundational literacy and numeracy, assessment, core skills for learning, flexible learning environments and Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.
- Teachers have requested more flexible professional learning time organized at the school level to better meet their needs.
- In the 2022-23 fiscal year the Department of Education allocated \$1.59 million for Professional Development (includes YAEP funding).
- Under Article 12 of the YAEP collective agreement, the department contributes \$475,000 annually to the Professional Development Fund.
- A Joint Trust Fund Management Committee with YAEP and department members (including Tanya Lewis, Director Curriculum & Assessment) sets the parameters for eligible activities for Deputy Minister approval each year, with funding administered by the YAEP's Professional Development Committee.
- Community of Inquiry #3 is to "Explore effective professional collaborative development structures where educators can learn how to structure learning options that will benefit students through more inclusive classroom practice." And to "Explore exemplary practices in Yukon schools or other educational settings to ensure culturally based lens is applied to PD options for EAs and all relevant school staff members".

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Teacher Professional Learning - PD Funding and  
Training**

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

02/27/2023

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Numeracy****Education****Value:**

- Numeracy skills are a key component of student success, and we are committed to improving these student proficiencies.

**Recommended Response:**

- Addressing student numeracy needs is a complex task, and no single approach or resource program is a solution for the many factors that influence student numeracy outcomes.
- The Department of Education recently launched working committees to develop longer-term strategies for developing culturally responsive numeracy programming in schools.
- This committee includes representatives from Yukon First Nations Education Directorate, and Department of Education staff, including educators, and administrators.
- We are providing training and support on new resources to support numeracy skill development.
- Part of this training and development plan is to support teachers in using assessments, gathering data to understand what is happening for their students, and then using this data to inform instructional practices and measure success.

**Additional Responses:**

- Training and support for Mathology, a new mathematics resource, has been ongoing, in collaboration with the First Nation School Board and the Commission Scolaire Francophone de Yukon.



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Numeracy****Education**

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- As we recover from the pandemic, we have prioritized literacy, numeracy, social-emotional development and mental health.
  - Schools are following the Yukon K-12 Education Recovery Plan, which outline key priorities including numeracy, literacy, and providing an inclusive environment for learning.
  - We continue to assess student learning and are closely monitoring the impacts of pandemic on learning outcomes.
- 

**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Yukon data indicate that numeracy proficiencies need improvement.
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**Background:**

- A new mathematics resource is currently being implemented in Yukon schools.
- This new resource supports the redesigned curriculum that was implemented beginning in 2019.
- A Culturally Responsive Numeracy Strategy Working group was launched in January, 2023.
- The Culturally Responsive Numeracy Strategy Working group is expected to have recommendations put forward by summer, 2023 and an implementation plan in place within a year.
- The working group currently has representation from Yukon First Nation Education Directorate, teachers, administrators, Student Support Services and Curriculum and Assessment.

Tracking literacy and numeracy progress

- The BOEHM and Early Years Evaluation (EYE) assessments provide data on student's numeracy at primary levels.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Numeracy****Education**

- The new Mathology resource has built in assessments for teachers to use. These assessments include instructional supports to address any identified gaps.

Assessments and data

- The Yukon conducts a number of assessments of students at each grade to help teachers and parents focus on ways to support student learning.
- Yukon-wide data and descriptions of assessments are on Yukon.ca.
- We assess numeracy at key points during a student's education, including in Grades 4 and 7 through the Yukon Foundation Skills Assessments. In the past, these assessments were written late in the school year. They have now been moved to the fall of each school year so teachers can use the information from these assessments to make adjustments and provide supports to students who need it.
- At the high school level, students write the Grade 10 Numeracy Assessment.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****3/13/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Value:**

- We provide all Early K-12 students a modern curriculum that follows best practices from across Canada and the world, and incorporates Yukon's context and Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being.

**Recommended response:**

- The curriculum is designed to be student-centered with more hands-on and personalized learning opportunities, incorporating career and finance education along with applied skills, design, and technology requirements.
- The concept-based and competency-driven curriculum allows for students to access deeper understanding of concepts and application of processes as opposed to memorization of isolated information.
- Flexible learning environments that include space for incorporating local contexts and place-based learning opportunities are at the forefront of the current curriculum.
- The two-year pandemic recovery recognizes that experiential learning and on-the-land learning remain important elements of learning – these are being explored in a community of inquiry in order to determine recommendations going forward.
- Numeracy and literacy development is designed to be integrated across the curriculum, not just in the English Language Arts and Mathematics curriculum.

**Additional response:**

- Core competencies, a set of intellectual, personal, and social and emotional proficiencies are embedded within the current curriculum.
- We will continue working collaboratively with Yukon First Nations partners to develop stronger programming for delivering the curriculum to meet the needs of all Yukon students.
- The Department of Education and associated school boards, including the First Nations School Board, all follow the same curriculum.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The First Nation School Board (FNSB) is choosing to use different resources to support literacy development.
  - Choosing different resources could be misunderstood that the FNSB is not following the same curriculum.
  - The FNSB is using the same curriculum but choosing different resources to support the curriculum.
- 

**Background:**

- Yukon schools began using the redesigned curriculum in Kindergarten to Grade 9 in 2017–2018, Grade 10 in 2018–2019, and Grades 11 and 12 in 2019-20.
- The redesigned curriculum is based on BC's modernized competency-based curriculum. BC is a leading jurisdiction in Canada and the world in education, and Yukon has used BC's curriculum for many years, and will continue to do so.
- Many high-performing national and international jurisdictions are teaching skills development ("competencies").

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Yukon Education Curriculum****Education**

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- The changes to the curriculum are based on international research and extensive consultations with teachers and experts in education; references available on the BC Ministry curriculum website.
- In 2016/2017, senior department officials visited all Yukon school communities to present changes to the curriculum through public meetings and meetings for school staff, School Councils, and Yukon First Nations, as requested. We estimate that 10-50 people attended the open houses at each school.
- In 2016, the Advisory Committee for Yukon Education recommended Yukon use BC's curriculum, with Yukon and Yukon First Nations adaptations.
- Teachers and other educational staff continue to engage in inquiry processes through learning networks to improve outcomes for students as an avenue to dig into ways to deliver the curriculum to students.
- This spiral of inquiry process engages teachers and educational staff in digging deep into their practices and making informed changes to improve outcomes for students.
- Dawson City is running a mini REM (Rural Education Model) this May as an outcome from teachers engaging in the 2022/23 learning networks.
- The Department of Education is supporting this mini REM through funding and in-kind support.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****04/26/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****EA Allocation in Schools****Education**

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**Value:**

- We are rethinking how we support all students with instructional supports and interventions to better meet their learning needs.

**Recommended response:**

- Through the Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education initiative, we are examining how we allocate Education Assistants (EAs) and other resources.
- CASA committed to increasing the number of Educational Assistants and Learning Assistant Teachers in schools in 2023/24 school year.
- We are actively recruiting Educational Assistants and Learning Assistant Teacher needs for the 2023/24 school year.
- There is a community of inquiry working on understanding better ways to align funding models and staffing allocations with student needs.
- Looking at effective professional development and learning opportunities, for teachers and educational assistants, is also connected to this work.
- Educational Assistants are one of several resources that a school has to support students' learning. These resources include:
  - Inclusive classroom practices implemented by classroom teachers to provide learning activities that support students with diverse or exceptional needs;
  - School counsellors and learning assistance teachers;

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****EA Allocation in Schools****Education**

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- Supports from the department's Student Support Services unit, the Curriculum and Assessment unit, the First Nations Initiatives branch, and the newly formed Inclusive Policy and Practice unit;
- First Nations' Education Support Workers, and Community Education Liaison Consultants; and
- Community-based supports, such as those provided by Health and Social Services.
- Currently a needs-based model is used to allocate these educational assistant positions in a fair and equitable way across Yukon schools.
- These allocations vary and are adjusted each year as school and students' needs and school enrolments change.

**Additional response:**

- When appropriate, we support students with developing their independence and self-advocacy skills. When progress is made, the need for EA support may be reduced after evaluating their successful skill development.
- Schools are responsible for determining day-to-day EA schedules to maximize meeting both individual and shared needs of students, when appropriate.
- There is an increase in EA allocation requests from schools. Schools are focused on recovery from the pandemic and working to better understand the needs of students and how to best to support their educational programming.

# **Session Briefing Note**

## **EA Allocation in Schools**

# **Spring Session 2023**

## **Education**

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### **Context:**

- The Department has seen a significant increase in EA requests from schools.
  - CASA commitment to increase EA and Learning Assistance teachers in school for the 2023/24 school year.
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### **Background:**

#### Request increase

- There has been a steady increase in the request for EA support for students entering into Kindergarten who have been followed by the CDC.
- Each year there is also an increase in the requests for support for academics, behaviors and social emotional supports.

#### Educational assistant allocation

- The 2022-23 budget allocation for EAs is \$16.4 million (236.9 FTEs). This includes EAs for schools now governed by the First Nation School Board. An additional 14.0 EAs at \$0.9 million is allocated for CSFY, for a total of \$17.3 million and 25.9 FTE.
- The 2021-22 budget allocation for EAs was \$15.413 million (236.40 FTEs), and CSFY had 12 EAs at \$0.79 million for a total of \$16.203 million and 248.40 FTE.
- The 2020-21 budget allocation for EAs was \$15.95 million (245.40 FTEs – includes both Department of Education and CSFY).
- The 2019-20 budget allocation for EAs was \$15.1 million (245.40 FTEs – includes both Department of Education and CSFY).

#### Educational assistant allocation process

- In 2015-16, an 'Educational Assistant Allocation Advisory Committee' recommended the current needs-based allocation process.
    - Each school assesses its needs and submits a request for Educational Assistants to the Schools and Student Services Branch.
    - The Student Support Services staff review all of the schools' requests and use a needs-based formula to initially allocate Educational Assistants.
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## Session Briefing Note

## Spring Session 2023

## EA Allocation in Schools

## Education

- Educational Assistants are allocated to schools in the spring, and the principal assigns them within the school to best meet student needs.
- At the beginning of the new school year, adjustments are made to the allocations based on actual student enrolment and needs at each school, and allocations may be further adjusted during the school year as needs change.

## 1) School-Based Allocations:

The base allocation for each school is determined by student enrolment and an index of assessments from Yukon's Student Assessment Matrix.

- (a) Initial allocation by enrolment:
- (b) Elementary index allocation is based on Kindergarten assessments, including the Boehm (test of Basic Concepts) and EYE (Early Years Evaluation), as well as the Grade 4 FSAs (Foundational Skills Assessment) and Grade 7 FSAs.
- (c) Secondary index allocation is based on an average of the elementary index of the feeder schools.

## 2) Intensive needs allocation:

To provide shared or intensive support for student needs:

- (a) In addition to the school-based allocations, each school can request EA support to either be shared by groups of students or to be assigned to a specific student based on their intensive support needs (e.g. may require 1-1 support).
- (b) The Department of Education assesses each school's requests in this category with consideration of student data and criteria in order to determine the need for student-specific supports.

School	Allocation for the 2022-23 School Year as of September 6, 2022
<b>Yukon Education Schools</b>	
Christ the King	14.75
Hidden Valley	13.5
Elijah Smith	15.75
Holy Family	9.25
Jack Hulland	16.75
Golden Horn	5.5
Selkirk	14.75

# Session Briefing Note

# Spring Session 2023

## EA Allocation in Schools

## Education

School	Allocation for the 2022-23 School Year as of September 6, 2022
Whitehorse Elementary	11.0
Porter Creek Secondary	15.5
FH Collins	17.5
St. Francis of Assisi	12.75
Kluane Lake School	1.0
Ghuch Tla (Carcross)	3.75
Khàtinas.àxh Community School (Teslin)	4.0
Del Van Gorder (Faro)	3.5
JV Clark (Mayo)	3.0
Tantalus (Carmacks)	7.5
Eliza Van Bibber (Pelly)	4.75
Robert Service School	4.75
ILC	1.5
Teen Parent Centre	1.0
<b>First Nation School Board Schools</b>	
Grey Mountain	4.0
Takhini	10.0
Johnson Elementary	7.75
Watson Lake Secondary	3.5
Ross River School	4.5
Chief Zzeh Gittlit (Old Crow)	3.0
St. Elias Community School	11.0
Nelna Bessie John	1.0
<b>Francophone School Board Schools</b>	
École Emilie-Tremblay	7.0
Centre Scolaire Secondaire Communautaire Mercier	2.5
<b>Student Support Services</b>	<b>9.9</b>
<b>Total Department Allocated</b>	<b>245.9</b>
<b>Additional Francophone School Board</b>	<b>5.0</b>
<b>Total</b>	<b>250.9</b>

**Session Briefing Note**  
**EA Allocation in Schools**

**Spring Session 2023**  
Education

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Approved by:

Mary Cameron

04/26/2023

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Housing for Teachers (in communities)****Education**

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**Value:**

- The Government of Yukon recognizes that staff housing has a role in supporting the recruitment and retention of teachers in Yukon communities.

**Recommended response:**

- We are continuing to work, within available resources, to assist staff in rural communities to meet their housing needs.
- This is challenging and complex work as housing supply is limited, especially in rural communities.
- Currently there are 50 teachers in Yukon Housing units in the communities.
- An additional three staff are in private housing leased by the government and then sublet to them.
- All other staff have private housing, which they either rent or have purchased themselves.
- Teachers' ability to receive extensions on staff housing gives them security and confidence.
  - The Department of Education, Yukon Housing, and the Public Service Commission created a solution in alignment with the policy, where the department will recommend extensions annually on behalf of any teachers subject to renewal.
  - This solution ensures that teachers will not receive notices of term end, and supports the department's recruitment and retention strategy.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Housing for Teachers (in communities)**

Education

**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- While all teachers working in rural communities have housing, some remain concerned about the condition of their housing.
- Teachers have expressed concerns around communication from YHC on the policy and process to request extension.
- Not all communities have housing options through Yukon Housing and have limited private housing options, such as Carcross. Some teachers have expressed concerns with having to commute long distances to attend work at their expense.
- YAEP has voiced concerns publicly that housing is impacting our recruitment potential.

**Background:**

- The Yukon Housing Corporation (YHC) manages Yukon government staff housing units in accordance with G.A.M. Policy 3.30 Staff Accommodation.
- The policy for staff housing was revised in May 2019 in respect to eligibility, tenancy agreements and duration, rental rates, and assignment.
- In communities outside Whitehorse, there may be staff units provided by YHC. If this is not available, staff are required to find their own private accommodation.
- For communities that do have a private market housing, we work with the school principal and contacts in that community to refer staff to available private housing.
- When YHC staff housing is not available in a community the department may provide an employee with improvements on terms and conditions of employment for a specific period (i.e., rent subsidy or additional relocation assistance), the department agrees to consult with the YAEP.

**Approved by:**

Mary Cameron

02/03/2023

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy Education**

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#### **Value:**

- Effective teachers are one of the most important factors in a student's success at school and we work to attract and retain the best educators.

#### **Recommended response—recruitment efforts:**

- The ongoing national labour shortages, the housing shortage and the pandemic have continued to have impacts on our overall recruitment efforts.
- For the 2023-24 school year, we have taken action on recruitment factors that are in our control.
  - We posted positions earlier to be more competitive with other jurisdictions.
  - We have participated in online career fairs, and the Yukon University fair, and placed advertising on LinkedIn, Facebook, Google, YouTube, and through Canadian universities.
  - To date, teacher recruitment has attended 6 online job fairs and 12 in-person education career fairs in the Yukon, Ontario, Alberta, Nova Scotia, Saskatchewan, and New Brunswick.
  - These steps have supported our recruitment efforts.
- We continue to work to find staff with the best combination of qualifications, experience and suitability.
- In terms of recruitment for the 23/24 school year, postings as of April 26, 2023, include:
  - 30 Teacher postings (18 Whitehorse, 12 Rural);
  - 0 Yukon First Nations Language Teacher postings (0 Whitehorse, 0 Rural);

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy  
Education**

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- 4 Principal and Vice Principal postings (2 Whitehorse, 2 Rural); and
  - 7 Education Assistant postings (7 Whitehorse, 0 Rural).
- We began posting for rural schools, French Immersion, and French Schools for the 2023/24 school year in February 2023. External posting began after our internal process in April 2023 and many positions have been filled.
- The new CASA agreement commits the Yukon government to allocate an additional \$1 million in each of the next three budgets to enhance recruitment and retention of new rural education professionals across the Yukon. We have reached out to the Yukon Association of Education Professionals about this, and will work to implement this in the near term.
- As per the CASA, we will also provide a one-year training plan program for Educational Assistants and Teachers on Call by 2024 in collaboration and consultation with the Yukon Association of Education Professionals, Learning Disabilities Association of Yukon, and Autism Yukon.

**Additional response—temporary vacancy management:**

- Operational management of schools routinely requires regular adjustment by Administrators, and I commend our Administration teams for their ability to effectively make adjustments where temporary vacancies have put increased demands on staff resources.
- Schools have several options available to help them manage should they have a need. These include, but are not limited to:

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy  
Education**

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- Temporarily adjusting staff teaching assignments;
  - Adjustments to student learning groups; and
  - The use of Teachers on Call.
- If a school indicates it may be unable to operate due to a shortage of staff, temporary redeployment of central administration staff to schools or regrouping students will be considered before a shift to remote learning. School closure is a last resort.

**Additional response—psychological wellbeing:**

- The Government of Yukon offers a variety of supports for staff to address workplace challenges, including:
  - Health, Safety and Wellbeing resources to assess, protect and promote psychological safety in the workplace;
  - Our Employee and Family Assistance Program to assist staff on an individual level; and
  - The Respectful Workplace Office is another avenue for staff who are experiencing conflict in the workplace to receive support and guidance.

**Additional response—TOCs:**

- Teachers on Call, or TOCs, are valued. They play a key role in supporting schools through routine short term absences and illness.
- TOCs are recruited on an ongoing basis, and are included in the Yukon Association of Educational Professionals bargaining unit.
- As of April 26, 2023 registered TOC numbers are steady, with 265 registered in the Yukon (205 Whitehorse, 60 Rural), with an additional 18 applications pending (17 Whitehorse, 1 Rural).



**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**School Staffing Concerns - Recruitment, TOCs, Vacancy  
Education**

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Teacher and principal vacancies for the start of the 2022-23 school year were topics in the media, and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals has expressed concerns.
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**Background:**

- TOCs fill in as needed when staff are absent from work for a short periods of time. TOCs come from a range of educational backgrounds. They became part of the Yukon Teacher's Association in 2018, and their rate of pay is subject to negotiation in collective bargaining.
- Similar to other jurisdictions across Canada, we have challenges in hiring qualified teachers.
- We do not have rules preventing staff with jobs in one school from applying for other vacancies in the summer, which can result in a “domino effect” of postings. This also affects TOC availability, as some TOCs are successful in competing on vacant positions and are subsequently removed from the TOC list.
- TOCs have been sent from Whitehorse to our communities throughout the 22-23 year to support school needs.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**4/27/2023**

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Teacher Allocation – Staffing****Education**

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**Value:**

- Effective teachers are one of the most important factors in a student's success at school. Equitable staffing is a priority to ensure that each school community is staffed appropriately.

**Recommended response:**

- We allocate teaching positions – full-time equivalents or FTEs – across the three school authorities in a consistent and transparent way to meet the needs of Yukon students and schools.
- To provide consistent service levels in all schools, teacher allocation – set out in the Collective Agreement between the Government of Yukon and the Yukon Association of Education Professionals – is primarily based on student enrolment and class sizes.
- For the 2022-23 school year, 10.0 FTE have been allocated as "reconciliation staffing" as an initial step to recognize the systemic inequities and colonialist practices that have negatively impacted Yukon First Nations and other Indigenous students.

**Additional response:**

- Student enrolment has increased in recent years, and the department is working to ensure consistent service levels in schools, and effective targeted supports for students with diverse learning needs.
- While overall enrolment is increasing, some individual schools have decreasing enrolment, which may have impacted their school's staffing allocation.
- Some FTEs are held "in contingency" to allow for fluctuations in enrolment that appear in the fall and throughout the school year. This

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Teacher Allocation – Staffing****Education**

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year we have provided contingency to each school authority to support nimble decision making for school needs.

- CASA committed to increasing the number of Educational Assistants and Learning Assistant Teachers in schools in 2023/24 school year.
  - We are actively recruiting Educational Assistants and Learning Assistant Teacher needs for 2023/24 school year.
- 

**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Allocating staff to Yukon schools is an issue of interest for school communities.
  - 2023-24 teacher staffing allocations were released to schools at the end of January 2023.
  - CASA commitment to increase EA and Learning Assistance Teachers in school for the 2023-24 school year.
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**Background:**

- Yukon school staffing levels are reviewed each fall to align with actual student enrolment and the needs of the students at each school, and any needed adjustments are made.
  - An increase in students sometimes requires an increase in staff to maintain consistent service levels across schools. School staffing plans are made after the allocation is received, and may result in jobs needing to be posted or for employees to be redeployed.
  - The School Staffing Allocation Handbook was developed to allocate teacher and other school staff positions consistently and transparently. Enrolment, school size, grades taught, rural location, and programs of choice (French Immersion) are factors.
    - To ensure equitable and standard service levels in all Yukon schools, each school receives a base number of FTEs through the allocation formula, regardless of how many students are enrolled at the school.
    - Other resources may be allocated to support specific initiatives, such as Aboriginal Language Teachers, Religious Education, French programming
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## Session Briefing Note

## Spring Session 2023

## Teacher Allocation – Staffing

## Education

(Intensive French) and English Language Learners. These differentiated resource allocations have their own allocation formulas or models.

- Additional FTEs may be provided to schools to support specific initiatives like Reading Recovery and Early Kindergarten.
- Principals receive a staffing allocation each year, and then they assign the FTEs within their school, with input from their School Council.
- From the staffing allocation handbook:
  - For the 2022-23 school year, Achievement Equity has been replaced by Reconciliation Staffing as recommended by a Community of Inquiry stemming from the Review of Inclusive and Special Education.
  - Reconciliation Staffing is a small step to recognize the systemic inequities and colonialist practices that have negatively impacted Yukon First Nations and other Indigenous students. It reallocates the 10.0 FTE of Achievement Equity staffing to recognize schools based on two factors:
    - Those that significantly above average populations of Yukon First Nations or other Indigenous students; and
    - Those schools where multiple Yukon First Nations are represented.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

04/26/2023

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring 2023**

### **Compensation of School-Based Employees – YAEP Policy Grievance**

Public Service  
Commission

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#### **Recommended response:**

- We value our school-based employees for their hard work in providing a quality education to students across the territory.
- We are committed to ensuring that Yukon Association of Educational Professionals (YAEP) bargaining unit employees are properly compensated pursuant to the collective agreement.
- Yukon government continues to work with the YAEP to ensure matters under grievance and before the Yukon Teachers Labour Relations Board are appropriately addressed.
- On December 28, 2022, the Yukon Teachers Labour Relations Board issued a decision allowing the grievance and declaring that the Yukon Government had breached the Collective Agreement.
- The Yukon government and YAEP have since discussed and have successfully come to agreement on a remedy to the satisfaction of both parties.

#### **Additional response:**

- The government expects that as part of that remedy, payments to affected school employees will be made by the end of March.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- YG and the YAEP have disagreed about whether permanent school-based employees were properly compensated in the Fall of 2019 as a result of amended Collective Agreement language. The adjudication decision resolves that disagreement in favour of the YAEP. There may be questions about how YG is managing relations with the YAEP regarding implementation of the decision and remedy for affected permanent school-based employees.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring 2023****Compensation of School-Based  
Employees – YAEP Policy Grievance**Public Service  
Commission

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**Background:**

- The previous collective agreement between the Yukon government and YAEP (in force July 1, 2018 to June 30, 2021) included a provision regarding pay processing for permanent school-based employees (Article 14.04).
- The provision moved permanent school-based employees to the same continuous and bi-weekly pay system as other YG employees, meaning they were paid throughout the whole year instead of during the school year.
- In September 2019, YAEP filed a policy grievance with respect to how YG pays teaching staff “in accordance with the pay system of the employer” under the 2018-2021 YAEP - YG Collective Agreement.
- The Public Service Commissioner heard the policy grievance in December 2019 and in January 2020 rendered a decision in favour of the employer, stating:
  - that the change and transition to recurring bi-weekly pays did not result in permanent employees being shorted on their pay; and
  - YG did not fail to comply with consultation under Article 33, as it was an implementation of agreed-upon negotiated provisions in the new collective agreement.
- YAEP subsequently referred the grievance to Yukon Teachers Labour Relations Board for adjudication. The matter was heard March 22-24, 2021.
- YAEP has also submitted individual grievances on behalf of YAEP members and these have been consolidated with the policy grievance.
- On December 28, 2022, a decision allowing the grievance was issued by the Board. The decision declares that the employer breached articles of the collective agreement.
- The Yukon Government and YAEP then entered discussions and were able to successfully come to agreement on a remedy to the satisfaction of both parties.
- The 2021-2024 Collective Agreement includes new pay administration language that provides payments over 26 pays for permanent employees and over 22 pays

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring 2023**

### **Compensation of School-Based Employees – YAEP Policy Grievance**

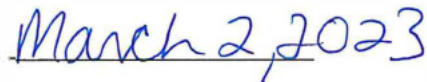
Public Service  
Commission

for temporary employees. It also puts all schools across the Yukon on the same pay administration schedule.

- Under this new language, no concerns have been raised about ongoing pay discrepancies.

**Approved by:**

  
Public Service Commissioner

  
Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Attendance Areas****Education**

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**Value:**

- Attendance areas support the governance and operation of schools, and support the School Council election process.

**Recommended response:**

- When a new school or residential area is approved for construction or expansion, or a school joins a school board, attendance areas will be reviewed and impacted neighbouring schools consulted.
- Attendance area changes in 2022 were necessary to:
  - Establish the attendance area for the new Whistle Bend Elementary School currently under construction.
  - Respond to the creation of the First Nation School Board and the referendums that were conducted at Takhini Elementary and Grey Mountain Primary; and
  - Eliminate gaps in coverage, and support the ongoing effective use of our schools and student enrollment.

**Additional response:**

- The new Whistle Bend Elementary School attendance area is based on the city boundaries for the subdivision, plus portions of the previous Takhini Elementary School attendance area.
- This new school attendance area will help address student enrollment growth at north-end elementary schools when the school becomes operational.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The department has recently made changes to attendance areas in Whitehorse.
- Any school joining the First Nation School Board requires the dissolution of its attendance area, and in Whitehorse that area needs to be redistributed to the remaining attendance areas.



# Session Briefing Note

# Spring Session 2023

## Attendance Areas

## Education

### Background:

- The Education Act requires that every school be assigned to an attendance area (for school councils) or an education area (for school boards). Students may be resident in multiple attendance or education areas, since the areas can overlap.
- Prior to the current areas being finalized in 2022, Whitehorse school attendance areas were last reviewed and changed for the 2008-09 school year. At that time some residential areas of Whitehorse were not officially included in an attendance area.
- The Whistle Bend Elementary School Council was elected at the same time as the November 2022 School Board Elections were held.
- The adjustments to attendance areas in 2022 included:
  - Establishing an attendance area for the new Whistle Bend school, based on the city boundaries for the subdivision, and arranging an election for a School Council. Jack Hulland Elementary school will remain the “in area” school for Whistle Bend elementary age students until the new school is operational.
  - Adding the Mt. Sima subdivision to the Golden Horn Elementary attendance area, which reflects current practice.
  - Adding the Marwell subdivision to the Selkirk Elementary attendance area, which reflects current practice.
  - Reassigning Lobird and Valleyview subdivisions to the Elijah Smith Elementary attendance area. Both subdivisions were previously assigned to Takhini Elementary, which is now governed by the First Nation School Board.
  - Splitting the old Takhini Elementary attendance area between Elijah Smith and Jack Hulland.
  - Cleaning up boundaries between areas to eliminate gaps in coverage.
- Parents registering their children for school can find the attendance areas on Yukon.ca.

### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

02/02/2023

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Early Kindergarten in Rural Schools**Education

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**Value:**

- Our goal is to ensure rural schools have the resources and training they need to deliver enhanced Early Kindergarten, which supports a child's transition to kindergarten programs through a literacy-rich, play-based early learning environment.

**Recommended response:**

- We continue to work with rural school communities, Yukon First Nations and the First Nation School Board to enhance Early Kindergarten programs in their communities.
- For the 2022-23 school year, all Yukon rural schools except Robert Service School in Dawson offer optional Early Kindergarten programming.
- Discussions continue with partners in the community of Dawson City on the future of Early Kindergarten.
- In respect of the 17.7 agreement, the Department of Education is in regular discussions with Tr'ondek Hwech'in in Dawson City regarding Early Kindergarten.
- All rural Yukon schools now have full-time optional Kindergarten programs.

**Additional response:**

- Early Kindergarten is intended to provide students with more time engaging in the kindergarten curriculum for critical skill development, thereby supporting a successful transition into the school years.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Early Kindergarten in Rural Schools****Education**

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- Early Kindergarten follows the same class size maximums (18 students per 1 Teacher) as outlined in the Yukon Association of Educational Professionals collective agreement for Kindergarten.
- When more student support is required, Early Kindergarten classrooms also have the support of an Educational Assistant and/or an Early Child Therapy Assistant (ECTA).
- We meet regularly with the Yukon Association of Educational Professionals on the Early Kindergarten Program Policy and implementation of Early Kindergarten.
- In the longer term, we will explore the feasibility of offering Early Kindergarten programming at schools in Whitehorse.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Enhanced early learning and child care programs were key areas identified during the Standing Committee on Public Accounts hearing on the Office of the Auditor General's report on K-12 education in January 2022 as supporting better student outcomes.

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**Background:**

- Kindergarten and Early Kindergarten programs are both optional for parents. Early Kindergarten programs are for children four years of age as of December 31st for that year.
- Full-day or half-day Early Kindergarten programming is now available in all rural schools except Robert Service School in Dawson City. Half-day Early Kindergarten is being implemented in Watson Lake in the 2022-23 school year.
- In 2022-23 we allocated 5.5 FTEs, based on community needs, to rural schools to support enhancing and expanding Early Kindergarten programs. These allocations remain part of the allocations for 2023-24.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Early Kindergarten in Rural Schools****Education**

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- Depending on enrolment, classes at a school may be Early Kindergarten, Kindergarten, or a split combination.
- An updated enrollment chart is included at the bottom of this note.
- The Yukon Association of Education Professionals (YAEP) has indicated concerns about Early Kindergarten ratios of teachers to students being different from ratios in early learning and daycare settings.
- We engaged with Yukon First Nations, school councils, YAEP and child care providers to establish the next steps for enhancing all early learning programming in rural communities, including Early Kindergarten programs.
- Engagement covered developing an Early Kindergarten program policy, as well as professional learning opportunities, curriculum and reporting requirements.
- During engagement, we were advised that a 'one size fits all' approach would not work for all communities, given the differences in available pre-school programming across rural communities and Yukon First Nations.
- An Early Kindergarten program policy was approved that:
  - Provides guidelines that support high quality EK programming in all rural schools in Yukon.
  - Establishes parameters for EK programs in order to ensure consistency in programming.
  - Allows for flexibility to accommodate local needs.
  - YAEP has questioned whether an Early Childhood Therapy Assistant (ECTA) should be replaced with EAs as ECTAs are not part of the YAEP collective bargaining agreement.

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Early Kindergarten in Rural Schools**

**Education**

**Summary of Enrollment (updated January, 2023)→ Rural Early Kindergarten (EK) and Kindergarten (K) Programs in 2022-23 School Year**

Rural School	EK	K	Stand-Alone EK	EK/K	EA Support	EK CDC Early Childhood Therapy Assistant (ECTA) Support
Chief Zzeh Gittlit School	Increase to full-day	Maintain full-day	No	Yes – 7 students 5 EK 2 K	No	Reposted for a full time ECTA
Del Van Gorder School	Increase to full-day	Increase to full-day	No	Yes – 9 students 6 E K 3 K		Yes
Eliza Van Bibber School	Increase to full-day	Maintain full-day	No	No – 6 students 0 EK 6 K	No EK students registered	No
Ghùch Tlá Community School	Still to be confirmed Increase to full-day	Increase to full-day	No	Yes – 5 students 3 EK 2 K	1 student identified and 0.25 EA FTE allocated	No - do not require an ECTA at this time
J.V. Clark School	Maintain half-day – possibly full day later in year	Increase to full-day	No	Yes – 8 students 4 EK half-day 4 K	No students identified	No – do not require ECTA at this time – regular checks in to see if situation changes

**Session Briefing Note**

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**Early Kindergarten in Rural Schools**

**Education**

Rural School	EK	K	Stand-Alone EK	EK/K	EA Support	EK CDC Early Childhood Therapy Assistant (ECTA) Support
Johnson Elementary School	Half day	Maintain full-day	Yes	Yes – students 7 EK	No students identified yet.	ECTA attends to do one therapy with a few kids on their caseload
Khàtinàs.àxh Community School	Increase to full-day	Maintain full-day	No	Yes - 12 students 6 EK 6 K	Student in K has a 1-1 EA 4 EK students are non-neurotypical but have not been assessed by CDC yet (pending parent permission)	No – CDC will work with school and families
Kluane Lake School	Maintain full-day	Maintain Full-day	No	2 students 0 EK 2 K	NA	No
Nelnah Bessie John School	Increase to full-day	Maintain Full-day	No	0 K 0 EK	NA	No
Robert Service School	No	Maintain full-day	No	Just K – 16 students	No students identified; so, no 1-1 EA	No – No EK.

**Session Briefing Note**

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**Early Kindergarten in Rural Schools**

**Education**

Rural School	EK	K	Stand-Alone EK	EK/K	EA Support	EK CDC Early Childhood Therapy Assistant (ECTA) Support
					allocation in K.	
Ross River School	Increase to full-day	Increase to full-day	No	Yes – 9 students 3 EK 6 K		Full time ECTA
St. Elias Community School	Increase to full-day	Increase to full-day	Yes	EK-10 students		Yes – 1.5 ECTA in Early K classroom (full time ECTA has given notice so position will need to be posted)
Tantalus Community School	Half day for EK	Maintain full-day	No	Yes, EK half time 9 students 1 EK 8 K		No

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2/28/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Emergency Procedures and Public Notices** Education

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**Safer Schools Policies and Procedures: refer to TAB DPT08****Department of Education Health and Safety Investigation: Refer to TAB DPT02****Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response:**

- Each school is required to have its own Emergency Response Plan, with detailed procedures for emergencies and other unforeseen events.
- School staff are professionals who are trained and prepared to care for students in the event of an emergency.
- When safety issues arise, the department works closely with the RCMP and other agencies to ensure the safety of students and staff.
- As a key action in the Safer Schools Action Plan, we have updated communication guidance for when and how schools are to communicate to parents, internal staff and other agencies such as the RCMP about incidents that occur at school.

**Additional response:**

- The first priority during an emergency is to secure the safety of students and staff. Once this has been attended to, communicating with parents and guardians becomes a priority.
- Schools practice emergency drills on a regular basis. This includes fire drills, earthquake drills, and lockdown procedures, among others.



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Emergency Procedures and Public Notices** Education

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- The Department of Education has several communication platforms to communicate quickly with families by email, text message, or telephone using the contact information that is on each student's record.
- We also remind parents that they should tune in to the radio rather than try to contact the school should an emergency arise so that phone lines are available for emergency use at the school.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There is often public and media attention on school safety issues.
- Some school communities have expressed concerns about escalated student behaviour resulting in schools being "locked down" and information not being communicated to parents.

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**Background:**

- Each fall, school principals prepare their School Emergency Response Plans, which include coordination with the RCMP and other agencies, evacuation routes and alternate sites, and security protocols, so that they can quickly respond to unforeseen events and emergencies.
- Schools provide an updated plan to their Superintendent, or School Board Executive Directors by October 15th. A hard copy of each plan is filed with the administrative assistant for the Superintendents and executive directors.
- Examples of drills commonly practiced at schools include fire drills, earthquake drills, lockdown procedures, and other evacuation drills.
- The department offers training for school staff to identify risks, signs of trauma, unhealthy social and bullying behaviours, and how to provide effective supports, and redirect behaviours, including: Nonviolent Crisis Intervention; Positive Behaviour Intervention Supports; and Violence Threat Risk Assessment.
- If an incident does occur, we support school staff through critical incident debriefing; the Family Services Employee Assistance Programs; restorative

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Emergency Procedures and Public Notices** Education

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approaches (with emphasis on addressing harm and building relationships after an incident); and support and collaboration from the RCMP, medical and other government and non-government agencies.

- The department prepares a letter each fall for schools to send to parents about what is involved in school emergency responses and drills.
- The department has licensed a unified communication platform (School Messenger) that automates contact with parents about emergencies via text, voice and email.
- Schools may also use the Aspen student information system to share information to parent/guardian email addresses only.
- In the fall of 2021, guidelines for communications were developed to assist school administrators to respond to minor, concerning, major, and incidents or allegations of assault/abuse/ criminal behaviour.
  - This tool was used to respond to the Faro shooting and the Jack Hulland RCMP investigation.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****02/02/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Enrolment at Yukon Schools**Education

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**Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan: refer to TAB S001****Value:**

- The Department of Education monitors student enrolment to help school administrators and school communities plan for changing trends and meet their short, medium and long-term needs.

**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon's population is increasing and we expect it will continue to grow over the years to come. We are prioritizing work on long-term capital planning, including the recently announced replacement of Whitehorse Elementary School.
- The new Whistle Bend Elementary School will help address enrolment growth in the north end of Whitehorse, and we have added portables at other schools.

**Additional response:**

- If enrolment at a school is high, we work with the school administration and council to find ways to increase overall capacity. Then, if needed, we work with families on a case-by-case basis to place students at other schools where space is available.
- The Department of Education works with the two Yukon school boards – the First Nation School Board and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon – to assess their enrolment pressures and determine their long-term school capacity needs.

## Session Briefing Note

## Spring Session 2023

## Enrolment at Yukon Schools

Education

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Concerns have been raised about schools perceived to be overcrowded, portable procurement, and long-term capital planning for schools.
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**Background:**

- The population growth in Whitehorse and the changing demographics of Whitehorse neighbourhoods affect enrolment in Whitehorse schools.
- The number of students that can be enrolled in a school is based on the number of classroom spaces and classes at each grade at the school, and the maximum class size allowed for those grades.
- School administrators manage their school's spaces on an ongoing basis by maximizing the use of classroom-sized spaces as classrooms, reorganizing students into split-grade classrooms, and increasing the class size beyond the maximum classroom size in accordance with the requirements of the collective agreement.
- Education and the First Nation School Board have clarified enrollment processes for students who wish to attend schools under the First Nation School Board or transfer to another school (e.g., in Whitehorse).
- The department is working with the First Nation School Board and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon on their vision and requirements for facilities.
- The department is working to address both short, mid and long-term student enrolment growth by taking the following actions:
  - **Short-term:** Consistent use of our new attendance areas, send students to other area schools if their grade level is full. In this case, transportation support is provided with busing or as a subsidy if busing is not available.
  - **Mid-term:** Add portables to increase the number of classroom-sized spaces available. Monitor attendance areas and number of students who live in a school's attendance area to align with the school's enrolment capacity.
  - **Long-term:** Confirm approved projects through the Government of Yukon's 5-year capital plan, and continue long-term facilities planning for schools through the capital planning process.

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Enrolment at Yukon Schools**

Education

OVERALL ENROLMENT COUNTS IN YUKON SCHOOLS				
	May 2021	May 2022	Jan 2023	Change (+/-) Since May 2022
All Yukon Schools	5,702	5,799	5,820	21
Communities Schools	1,096	1,110	1,080	-30
Whitehorse Schools	4,606	4,689	4,740	51
Elementary Students	3,592	3,656	3,670	14
Secondary Students	2,110	2,143	2,150	7
First Nation School Board	660	648	659	11
Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon	329	352	346	-6
Minister-Operated Schools	4,713	4,799	4,815	16

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**04/19/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

Enrolment numbers are as of January 17, 2023

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **French Immersion – Programming, Enrollment and Staffing**

Education

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#### **Value:**

- The Department of Education offers excellent French second language programs to students, and we are working with our partners and school communities to address the long-term needs of these programs.

#### **Recommended response:**

##### **Programming**

- Currently, the overall student demand for French Immersion programming is being met.
- The Government of Yukon plans to continue École Selkirk Elementary School as a ‘dual track’ English program/French Immersion school.
- We have committed to long-term planning for French as a second language programs and to create a vision statement in collaboration with the French Second Language Advisory Committee, which I understand is currently being worked on.
- This advisory body includes representation from the Department of Education, School Councils, Canadian Parents for French, school administrators and teachers.

#### **Early French Immersion (Kindergarten):**

- Early French Immersion is a popular program in Whitehorse, offered at École Whitehorse Elementary and École Selkirk Elementary.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****French Immersion – Programming, Enrollment and Staffing**

Education

- In response to family admission requests, two kindergarten classes, totaling 36 students, are enrolled at École Selkirk Elementary for the 2022-23 school year.
- In the 2022-23 school year we offered 36 Kindergarten seats at Selkirk and 66 seats at École Whitehorse Elementary for a total of 102 seats.
- Pre-registration for the 2023-24 school year closed on February 22, 2023. We are pleased to be filling three Kindergarten classes at École Whitehorse Elementary and one class of French Immersion at École Selkirk Elementary.
- We also have capacity to accept additional applications if needed.

**French Immersion teacher recruitment:**

- We continue to monitor and plan for enrolment in French Immersion including the recruitment of qualified French language teachers. French language teachers are in high demand all across Canada. Recruiting for these positions remains a challenge.
- We have attended and continue to attend job fairs both in person and virtually at post-secondary institutes where we know there are qualified French language teachers, to help with targeting our recruitment efforts.
- We have also increased advertising on job boards in post-secondary institutions that offer French language education programming.
- We have continued with pooled competitions and early posting for teaching positions in French Immersion Elementary schools for the

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****French Immersion – Programming, Enrollment and Staffing****Education**

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2023-24 school year, thanks to the dedication of our school administrators and superintendents.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There have been requests to expand French Immersion programming.
- École Whitehorse Elementary facility replacement project was announced June 2022.
- F.H. Collins is the in-catchment area school for all Yukon Education French Immersion Students.

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**Background:**Programming

- French Immersion is a popular program in Whitehorse, and is offered at École Whitehorse Elementary, École Selkirk Elementary and F. H. Collins Secondary School.
- École Whitehorse Elementary is a 'single track' school offering only French Immersion programs. Selkirk Elementary and F. H. Collins are 'dual track' schools meaning that both French Immersion and English language programs are available.
- The balance of instructional time between the two languages may differ at Selkirk vs Whitehorse Elementary, but the long-term outcomes are the same.

Early French Immersion (Kindergarten)

- The Kindergarten registration information night was held virtually on January 25, 2023
- Kindergarten French Immersion Pre-registration was open from February 1<sup>st</sup> to February 22<sup>nd</sup>, 2023.
- As of February 28, 2023, Selkirk Elementary school has 13 Kindergarten registrations and Whitehorse Elementary school has 53 Kindergarten registrations, for a total of 66 Kindergarten registrations.



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****French Immersion – Programming, Enrollment and Staffing**

Education

- For the 2023-24 school year, we had committed to 84 spaces (18 at Selkirk Elementary school and 66 at Whitehorse Elementary school.)
- A lottery system won't be necessary this year because the demand for Early French Immersion registration did not exceed capacity.
- As of February 28, 2023, Selkirk Elementary has 35 Kindergarten students (1 seat available) and École Whitehorse Elementary School has 65 Kindergarten students (1 seat available).
- We anticipate French Immersion seats available to families wishing to enroll their child at the Grade 1 level.
- For the 2022-23 school year, we committed 102 spaces (36 at Selkirk Elementary school and 66 at Whitehorse Elementary school) in French Immersion Kindergarten classes.
- Since 2015/16, when the demand for Early French Immersion registration exceeded capacity, the department has used a lottery system for admission to these programs, run with Canadian Parents for French.
- Every year since the lottery process has been in place, all students have been able to enroll in French Immersion in Kindergarten or Grade 1.

French Immersion teacher recruitment

- Part of the hiring process includes language testing by the French Language Services Directorate. They work closely with the Department of Education to ensure this testing is prioritized.
- As of February 28, 2023, we have 1 French Immersion teacher vacancy at Selkirk and 1 French Immersion teacher vacancy at ÉWES. These teaching assignments are being covered by other staff on a temporary basis.
- Enrolment in F.H. Collins Secondary School's FI program is expected to increase when Selkirk's French Immersion students reach Grade 8 (2023-2024).
- Retention in French Immersion drops in high school, so the demand for French Immersion is currently forecasted to be met by the program at F.H. Collins Secondary.
- CSSC Mercier has increased enrolment, which results in lower enrolment of EET students in French Immersion at FH Collins.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****French Immersion – Programming, Enrollment and Staffing****Education**

- A commitment has been made between the Department of Education (French Programs Unit) to work with Canadian Parents for French in Yukon to jointly support an initiative focused on recruitment of French Second Language teachers.

French Second Language Advisory Committee:

- The French Second Language Advisor Committee was formed in 2010 to strengthen FSL education in Yukon.
- This advisory body includes representation from the Department of Education, School Councils, Canadian Parents for French, school administrators and teachers.
- Education has committed to long-term planning for French as a second language programs and to create a vision statement in collaboration with the French Second Language Advisory Committee.
- A draft Vision, Mission and Principles statement was created last March but was paused as one member required additional time to finalize. The Department of Education is prioritizing finalizing the document with the committee at their upcoming May meeting.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****4/5/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Gadzoosdaa****Education**

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**Value:**

- The Department of Education offers various supports to families when students leave their communities to attend school.

**Recommended response:**

- The Department of Education works with staff and the Gadzoosdaa Advisory Committee to provide a safe, caring and enriched living environment for rural students pursuing learning opportunities in Whitehorse.
- We are committed to ensuring the program is effectively resourced and meeting today's needs and values – with a student-centred focus.
- A consultant is leading a program renewal process to look at how the needs have changed since the residence opened, and what is required for today's programming needs.

**Additional response:**

- Staffing and recruitment will be a key pillar of the program renewal as we agree that relationships and stability for the student and staff are important.
- The renewal work is targeted to be completed by the end of May or early June of this year.
- At the Gadzoosdaa Student Residence Advisory Committee meeting on April 6, 2023, our consultants shared the new timelines for the renewal process. Previously we had planned to have the renewal complete by early April. Current conversations are rich and engaging and we want to ensure everyone participating in the discussions feel heard.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Gadzoosdaa****Education**

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- Additional resources and staffing are being provided while the program renewal is completed.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Concerns have been raised about staffing levels at the residence.

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**Background:**Staffing concerns

- Some staff at Gadzoosdaa believe there is not an adequate staffing allotment to support programming for students in residence. Concerns are related to permanent staff being covered with casual staff in the short term.
- Several emails with regards to staffing and programming, and potentially the closure of the facility, have been received by the department.
- Departmental staff met with the staff at Gadzoosdaa Residence and the Advisory Committee to better understand their challenges with service delivery and resourcing.
- Additional staff supports were immediately put in place to ensure effective program delivery. These will remain in place until the program renewal is completed.
- A program renewal, led by IRP Consulting with input of the Advisory Committee, First Nations and the Department of Education will start in winter 2023. It will look at the mandate of the residence, staffing, culturally-relevant programming and student transportation. The outcome will inform 2023-24 operations and resourcing.
- The annual operating budget of \$1.39 million has not been reduced and there is no intent to close the residence.
- Financial and human resource allocations at Gadzoosdaa have been and continue to remain stable.
- Staffing levels were never reduced and have been as follows:
  - 10.8 FTEs – 2012 to 2018
  - 11.8 FTEs – 2019-20
  - 11.8 FTEs – 2020-21
  - 11.8 FTEs – 2021-22

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Gadzoosdaa****Education**

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- 11.8 FTEs – 2022-23
- A Gadzoosdaa Advisory Meeting was held October 28, 2022 from 9:30 to 11:30 a.m. The Advisory Committee recommended the following:
  - Restore previous staffing schedule to pre-COVID schedule (4-5 staff from 3 p.m. to 11 p.m. and 2-3 staff from 11 p.m. to 7 a.m.);
  - Work with the advisory committee to address student transportation concerns and options;
  - When program renewal happens, the original 5 First Nations must be included as partners in the process as well as the union; and
  - Recommend more Indigenization through programming and staff (partnership approach).

Gadzoosdaa Student Residence

- Students who are required to live outside their home community to attend school in Whitehorse may be provided with:
  - Accommodation at the Gadzoosdaa Student Residence in Whitehorse, which includes a travel subsidy; or
  - Certain travel subsidies to help offset travel costs to and from home communities during the school year.
- We are guided by the requirements of the *Education Act* and regulations, and we ensure that students receive the support they need in a fiscally responsible and equitable way.
- Gadzoosdaa Student Residence in Whitehorse is operating this school year — guided by operational plans developed in consultation with the CMOH office.

Transportation allowances for rural students attending high school in Whitehorse

- Over the years, certain practices developed similar to ‘transportation allowances’, where rural students coming to Whitehorse to attend high school are reimbursed for the cost of travel to and from their home communities during the school year.
- The department clarified its legislated responsibilities in order to ensure consistent application of the requirements of the Student Transportation Regulations. The maximum amount payable prescribed in M.O. 2004/10 must be adhered to in all circumstances.
- The following principles are now being applied to travel subsidy requests:
  - Students staying at Gadzoosdaa Student Residence because a specific secondary school program is not available in their community will be

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Gadzoosdaa****Education**

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entitled to a travel subsidy for expenses they incur for travelling to and from their home community during the school year, up to the maximum amount payable under M.O. 2004/10.

- Students moving to Whitehorse, those staying in a private residence because a specific secondary high school program is not available in their community and they were not able to stay in the Gadzoosdaa Student Residence are entitled to a travel subsidy. This does not apply if students are living with one or both parents in Whitehorse.
- Students who choose to come to Whitehorse to attend high school when a high school program that is appropriate to their needs is available in their community will not be entitled to a travel subsidy.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****04/19/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****K12 Technology in Yukon Schools**Education

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**Value:**

- The Department of Education is continually working to integrate educational technology into school programming and ensure that it is secure, reliable, and equitably accessible.

**Recommended response:**

- Online and digital learning technologies and resources are a key part of modern, blended and flexible learning.
- The Government of Yukon has budgeted \$2.524 million for education technology for Yukon students in 2023-24.
- The school IT budget is a 5-year plan which fluctuates annually, based on the planned projects in that fiscal year.
- The Department of Education continues to invest in modernizing school cybersecurity, access to computing devices, IT infrastructure, and bandwidth access to meet modern learning requirements.

**Additional response:**

- Students who do not have access to a personal device can access a school device as needed for their learning.
- We continue to donate retired Apple classroom computing devices to the Computers for Schools Yukon recycling program for K-12 students.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There has been a significant increase in student's use of technology and devices through the pandemic, which is expected to continue post-pandemic.
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**Background:**

- The department budgeted \$2.524 million in education technology to modernize learning in Yukon schools for 2023-24, including investing in upgrading school computing devices, infrastructure, and bandwidth access.
  - There was an increase in the IT capital budget by \$350k from 2022-23 to 2023-24.
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**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****K12 Technology in Yukon Schools****Education**

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- Online and digital learning technologies and resources are part of the blended learning approach for students and teachers.

Mobile devices for students

- The department is using a phased approach to implement a Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) initiative to further increase student access to computing devices in order to enhance learning.
- In 2020-21, the department partnered with Yukon First Nation governments for the purchase of 712 laptops to support First Nations students. These devices were delivered to participating First Nation governments and to student citizens.

Connectivity, wireless and bandwidth

- Students have internet access when at school through school wireless networks. For those students who do not have internet access at home, school administrators can consider arranging other options, either within the school or elsewhere in their community.
- The department continues to work with ICT and NorthwesterTel to improve bandwidth via upgrades. Education's service standard is 1Mbps per student.
- The department continues to enhance and modernize school networks and wireless capacity each year to ensure they have the capability to meet demands.

Learning technology

- The Information Technology and Support Services branch continues to develop and enhance a robust suite of web-based learning tools to support blended learning.
- The Department of Education continues to develop and enhance K-12 cybersecurity for students and their personal information.
- Classrooms are embracing new and robust modern learning tools; however, the K-12 cybersecurity technology may block untested technology and devices when at the school.

Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**02/28/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



**Session Briefing Note**  
**Kindergarten Registration****Spring Session 2023**  
Education

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**French Immersion Kindergarten: refer to TAB SP05****Value:**

- We work with families and school communities to ensure we are effectively managing student enrolment, teacher allocations and learning spaces, starting with the kindergarten registration process.

**Recommended response:**

- Families begin to register for kindergarten each year in February, and registration is finalized each September.
- Starting last year, families now have the opportunity to register for kindergarten in schools governed by the First Nation School Board, along with Department of Education and Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon-operated schools.
- Spaces are allocated for kindergarten students each year based on student enrolment forecasts, staffing allocations, and enrolment trends.
- In the event the number of students exceeds the number of spaces at a school, we work with the school authority to determine next steps and contact families to discuss options to meet their needs.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- French Immersion (FI) programming continues to be in high demand in particular for FI kindergarten.
- Questions may arise about enrolment in First Nation School Board (FNSB) schools across the Yukon.

# **Session Briefing Note**

## **Kindergarten Registration**

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# **Spring Session 2023**

## **Education**

### **Background:**

- Children are expected to attend their attendance area schools.
- In recent years there has been growing enrolment in kindergarten in the north end Whitehorse schools. We work with the school administration to determine steps to address increases.
- After processing student enrolment forms, the department contacts parents in March to confirm school assignments for their children. Parents then fill out additional forms at that school to finalize registration, including showing proof of their child's age.
- Registration is first-come, first-served for schools with fewer available spaces than students enrolling.
- If we cannot accommodate all in-area students at an attendance area school, we work with the school authority to determine next steps and contact families to discuss options to meet their needs.
- We may adjust classes to accommodate more students at the school (for example, adding an additional student to a class or making a Kindergarten/Grade 1 combined class), or working with the family to assign their child to another school with space.
- Parents in Whitehorse register online or by contacting the Department of Education. We continue to work with the FNSB to ensure processes are clear for kindergarten registration.

### Out of attendance area requests:

- Parents are asked to register their child in their attendance area school before making a request to have their child enrolled in a different school.
- To attend a school outside their attendance area, students must receive written permission from the Superintendent or Executive Director.

### Catholic school programs

- Catholic students are prioritized for registration in the three Catholic schools.
- Both Catholic elementary schools have a separate attendance area to determine which school students should register for based on their residence.

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Kindergarten Registration****Spring Session 2023**  
EducationFrench Immersion programs:

- For the Early French Immersion programs at Selkirk Elementary and Whitehorse Elementary, registration is open for one week, and when demand is high for these programs, the department may run a lottery to fill the programs.
- If neither school fills up, we continue to take registrations after the opening week on a first-come, first-served basis until space is filled.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****02/28/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****School Calendars****Education**

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**Value:**

- A great deal of planning and discussion goes into establishing school calendars, and we work to set a multi-year school calendar outlook to help school communities and families plan around the key dates of the school year.

**Recommended response:**

- We work with School Councils, School Boards and School Administrators to ensure there are multiple years of key calendar dates set and communicated to school communities, and that adjustments are made when necessary.
- School Boards must follow provisions under the Education Act, and also set their school calendars on or before March 31st.
- School calendar key dates, and a synopsis of individual school calendars, are made available online on Yukon.ca when they are finalized or changed.

**Additional response:**

- It is common for calendars to be amended after the current school year has started to accommodate any number of unanticipated occurrences.
- We continue to work with our partners on the 2024-25 preliminary school calendars to be able to confirm key start, end, and holiday dates.
- 2023–24 key dates for all Yukon schools are available on Yukon.ca.

# Session Briefing Note

# Spring Session 2023

## School Calendars

## Education

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### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Queen's Day of Mourning on September 19, 2022 resulted in Yukon schools needing to make up a full day of instructional time.
  - Not all key dates have been set for years after 2022-23.
- 

### Background:

- School superintendents and executive directors were notified on September 16, 2022 of the Queen's Day of Mourning on September 19, 2022 and that it would affect mandated instructional time in schools. They were advised of various options on how to calculate and make up the lost instructional time.
  - All schools, including those operated by the two school boards, have resolved their 2023-24 calendars, and this information has been posted to Yukon.ca.
  - Under the Education Act, the Minister sets the school calendar dates after considering advice from School Councils, including the school opening date, number of days of school operation, length of the school day, and number of minutes of instruction in a school day. This must be specified on or before March 31 of each year.
  - Each school year includes: 950 instructional hours for students; 3 non-instructional days determined by individual School Councils and their administrators; and 3 professional development days for school staff as determined by the Department of Education.
  - Different schools prefer different school calendar options, therefore the department generally offers a choice of three options (early, middle, and late start date).
  - In communities where there is more than one school (Whitehorse and Watson Lake), school calendars must be the same. This helps manage busing costs, and assists families with children attending more than one school.
  - The 2023-24 key dates for Whitehorse schools are:
    - August 22, 2023: First day of school for students
    - December 21, 2023 to January 5, 2024: Winter break
    - March 11 to March 22, 2024: March break
    - June 15, 2024: Last day of school for students
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**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****School Calendars**Education

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- Due to multiple changes in event dates due to Covid, neither the 2023 Arctic Winter Games or 2023 Canada Winter Games falls within the March break for 2022-2023.
  - Arctic Winter Games – Wood Buffalo, Alberta – January 29 to February 4, 2023.
  - Canada Winter Games – PEI – February 18 to March 5, 2023.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****02/28/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**  
**School Growth Planning****Spring Session 2023**  
Education

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**Value:**

- School Growth Plans are an important way to focus on student success and the impacts of school-level strategies to improve student learning outcomes and engagement.

**Recommended response:**

- In response to the 2019 Audit, the Department of Education is currently updating and improving its School Growth Planning process and policy.
- All schools include Yukon First Nations ways of knowing, doing and being in their School Growth Plans, aligning cultural, language, tradition and perspectives with the curriculum and local priorities.
- Updating the School Growth Planning Process is one way the Department seeks to further identify and address root causes of achievement gaps with an evidence-based approach.
- Connected to work on School Growth Plans, is the Student Outcome Strategy, which, upon recommendation of the First Nation Education Commission, is being developed collaboratively with Yukon First Nations and partners in education.

**Additional response:**

- There have been delays on this work due to the pandemic, but this work is progressing and remains a priority.
- The School Growth Planning Process for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 is being aligned with the Yukon Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Pandemic Recovery Plan.

# Session Briefing Note

## School Growth Planning

**Spring Session 2023**

Education

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The 2019 Auditor General report highlighted that the department needs to implement its required oversight mechanisms, including to provide summary reports of School Growth Plans to the Minister (Recommendation #47). School Growth Planning was also part of the Auditor General of Canada's recommendations in Audit 2009.

### Background:

- The Education Act provides that a school plan must be prepared for each school (by the school administration) that contains the school objectives, educational priorities, courses of study by grade, evaluation procedures, recommended budget and staffing requirements, and other information that is required for the effective functioning of the school.
- The department is working to update the School Growth Planning Policy; however, this work has been delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic. The work is progressing and remains a priority. School Growth Plans for the 2022-23 and 2023-24 are aligned with the COVID-19 Two-Year Recovery Strategy.
- School Growth Plans contain identify the school's educational goals and priorities for the school year, and are designed to be the road maps to improvement for each Yukon school.
- School Growth Plans are public documents and are shared with the Superintendent, School Councils and other local community partners as is appropriate. Depending on their scope, plans identify one to three years of educational priorities.
- The student outcome strategy developed in collaboration with Yukon First Nations and other educational partners will help define areas of focus that every school will use in their School Growth Plans. The First Nation Education Commission has asked us to engage with First Nations on a government-to-government basis. A consultant is leading this work.

### Approved by:

**Mary Cameron**

**2/28/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Cannabis and Yukon Schools**Education

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**Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response:**

- The City of Whitehorse recently declined to amend its zoning bylaw to enable a cannabis outlet to operate within 150 meters of a Whitehorse school.
- The Yukon government's regulatory approval process to license a retail cannabis store takes the safety of youth into consideration.
- I understand a recent applicant for a Cannabis license is seeking a judicial review over a decision by the City of Whitehorse on a grant a license to a cannabis dispensary. I will not be commenting on this matter as it is before the courts.

**Additional response:**

- Students learn age-appropriate information and decision-making skills about drugs, including cannabis, alcohol, and risky behaviours, as part of Yukon's school curriculum.
- Yukon educators are provided with lesson plans, activities and handouts for students on the legalization and health effects of cannabis, and harm reduction strategies.
- We encourage everyone to talk to the young people in their lives to help them make healthy choices and stay safe.
- These conversations need to happen inside and outside of school. Parents can find information and resources online through the Department of Health and Social Services or from their school.

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **Cannabis and Yukon Schools**

Education

- We provide the most current information and resources available to school staff, students and parents about the legalization of cannabis and its health effects.

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- At times concerns arise about young people using cannabis now that it is legalized, sometimes prompted by specific school incidents.
- In 2022 there was media coverage about a proposed City of Whitehorse bylaw amendment to allow a cannabis store on a site located less than 150m from a Whitehorse school.

#### **Background:**

- In March 2023 an applicant for a Cannabis licence sought a judicial review of a decision by the City of Whitehorse not to grant a licence because the proposed store was within 150 metres of a school.
- The applicant has argued that Montessori is a daycare and is not registered as a school.
- The department is following up with Montessori to ensure its registration is up to date.
- In October 2022, Whitehorse City Council voted to reject a zoning amendment request from a proposed cannabis store that would have been located within 150 metres of the Individual Learning Centre.
- The Yukon's curriculum has learning outcomes from Kindergarten to Grade 12 related to substances such as poisons, prescription medications, and drugs. Teachers focus lessons in physical and health education, and in other subjects, on locally relevant issues and topics like cannabis.
- The Department of Education has focused on:
  - completing a Substance Unit resource for Grades 8-12 teachers and providing professional development to teachers around this resource;
  - supporting teachers with the Let's Talk Pot presentation available online; and
  - working with Health Promotion to support principals on vaping policies.
- The Department of Education has also worked with Health and Social Services to provide information, resources and presentations with school staff to help them

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **Cannabis and Yukon Schools**

Education

accurately talk about cannabis legalization with students, including sharing information with parents to help them talk with their kids about cannabis and the Let's Talk Pot presentation delivered to 945 students.

- Additional resources for students include:
  - School counsellors, who can provide students with guidance and advice, including on healthy decisions.
  - Mental Wellness and Substance Use Counsellors from Health and Social Services.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**03/30/2023**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****CASA Agreement -IEP Reinstatement**Education

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**CASA – Careers in Health and Social Services: refer to TAB AE02**  
**Learning Plans (IEPs, SLPs, BSPs): refer to TAB SSS02**

**Value:**

- The 2019 audit and final report of the Review of Special and Inclusive Education says we can do better – and we will – to support students with diverse learning needs.

**Recommended response:**

- Under the new CASA, we will provide all students in needs of special education with the option of an Individualized Education Plan (IEP).
- There is currently a Community of Inquiry that is looking specifically at IEPs. This Community has been tasked to “Update and implement a consistent IEP template, process and structures that incorporate student voice and create accountability structures around IEPs”.
- Central Administration staff are monitoring the time frames of each reporting period for IEPs to ensure they are being updated and that multiple versions are on file – reflecting that the IEP has been regularly reviewed and goals and objects have been evaluated.
- At any time, parents and guardians can and are encouraged to bring forward concerns to their school to ensure a student is being effectively supported.
- IEPs are, and will continue to be, a legislated support for students in need of a special education program.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****CASA Agreement -IEP Reinstatement****Education**

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**Additional response:**

- Under the first Confidence and Supply Agreement (CASA), all parents and guardians of students whose plans changed from an IEP to another type of learning plan since the fall of 2019 were contacted directly by schools before the end of the 2020-21 school year and given the choice to remain on the current plan or switch back to an IEP.
- All learning plans, including IEPs, are commitments to students and families to provide the supports necessary for students to be successful in school. The type of plan in no way limits access to supports available to students.
- School staff worked with parents through the 2021-22 school year to update IEPs and other learning plans, and they have been setting up routine meetings to monitor and report to parents on student progress.
- As a result of the first CASA agreement:
  - 39 student learning plans were identified to be reinstated as IEPs for implementation for the start of the 2021-22 school year.
  - 22 families affirmed the desire for their child to remain on a Student Learning Plan; this is their choice.
  - 10 plans were identified as students who have moved out of the territory or graduated.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Under subsection 4(d) of the original CASA agreement: 'The recent cancellation of IEPs for children with special learning and neurodiverse needs will be reversed. Those IEPs that are cancelled will be reinstated within 30 days, and any future

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****CASA Agreement -IEP Reinstatement****Education**

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changes to policies or processes in respect of IEPs will only be made following meaningful consultation with stakeholders.

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**Background:**

- We report on the number of active IEPs annually through [our Yukon Wide Student Data reports](#) (each March for the previous school year) and [our annual reports](#) (in spring of each year). This number does change from year-to-year based on a variety of factors such as:
  - Some students may have completed school.
  - Some students may have moved away from the territory.
  - Some new students who require an IEP may have just started school, for example they have just moved to the territory.
  - Some students may have made progress in their learning to the point where additional supports are no longer needed for them to complete the learning outcomes in the curriculum.
- There were 393 students on IEPs for the 2021-22 school year.

Working with families per CASA:

- Schools and Student Services branch staff worked with each school to contact the parents of students who were transitioned to a Student Learning Plan (SLP) or a Behaviour Support Plan (BSP) in 2019 to give them the opportunity to have their child switched back to an Individual Education Plan if they wish to do so.
- A total of 71 plans were identified as moving to SLPs. Originally, 62 IEPs were found to have changed to Student Learning Plans after the fall of 2019. 9 plans were also identified where the data was not clear about when the plan had changed, so those parents/guardians were contacted as well.
- Schools were provided with the information for their school, with instructions to contact each family by the end of day on Friday, May 28 to determine whether they wish to have their child's learning plan switched back to an IEP.

Background on what occurred in Fall 2019:

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****CASA Agreement -IEP Reinstatement****Education**

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- While responding to information requests from the Auditor General of Canada during the most recent audit, central administration staff identified considerable variability in the use of IEPs, SLPs, and BSPs among schools.
- As a result, presentations to school staff were given in fall 2019 to review the requirements of the Education Act and to clarify the criteria used for different learning plans, to ensure consistency across Yukon schools.
- This included guidance for working with families to ensure their child is on a plan that best outlines the supports they need to reach their maximum potential.
- In some cases, this meant that school staff worked with families to shift a student to a SLP or BSP instead of an IEP.
- At the same time, the direction given was that students could not be switched from an IEP without agreement from their parents/guardians.
- This was not about reducing the learning supports available for students, rather it was about providing students with the specific plans, tools and services they need to be successful in school.
- The type of learning plan a student has in no way limits the type of learning support that are available to the student.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****4/27/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Child and Youth Advocate**

Education

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**CYAO referenced in the Jack Hulland note (TAB SI10)**

**Value:**

- The Department of Education recognizes the Child and Youth Advocate's valuable role of advocacy and support.

**Recommended response:**

- We appreciate the 2021-22 Annual Report of the Child and Youth Advocate Office, which outlines work undertaken by the Child and Youth Advocate in the areas of student attendance, safety in schools and education and behavioural supports for students with special needs.
- As outlined in the Advocacy Protocol Agreement between our two organizations, building and maintaining relationships through cooperative information sharing is a priority.
- We continue to have regular meetings with the Child and Youth Advocate to discuss matters of shared interest and to find solutions to individual and systemic advocacy matters.
- These meetings offer an opportunity to collaborate with the Child and Youth Advocate on individual advocacy matters along with broader initiatives, including student safety and attendance.

**CYAO Report:**

- We value the work of the Child and Youth Advocate to review and report on sexualized abuse in Yukon schools.



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Child and Youth Advocate****Education**

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- We accepted the report recommendations in principle, and a detailed formal response from the Department was provided directly to the Child and Youth Advocate on November 23, 2022.
- Many of the recommendations in the report closely align with the work currently underway as a part of Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education (RISE) and the Safer Schools Action Plan.
- We have taken significant action and will continue to address the issues that have been identified in the reports we have received to date.

**Student Attendance Report:**

- We received the report on student attendance from the Child and Youth Advocate in May 2021, and acknowledged it in ceremony alongside the Review of Inclusive and Special Education report in June 2021.
- We accepted the report recommendations in principle, and a detailed formal response from the Department has been provided directly to the Child and Youth Advocate.
- Many recommendations in the attendance report overlap with those from the Review of Inclusive and Special Education. We worked in partnership with the First Nation Education Commission and the Advisory Committee on Yukon Education to develop and finalize a work plan to guide our joint response to the Review of School Attendance and the Review of Inclusive and Special Education.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Child and Youth Advocate****Education**

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- Through regular online reports to partners and the public, we will share progress on this work.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Child and Youth Advocate has undertaken two Education-related, systemic reviews (Attendance and Hidden Valley Elementary School) and has advised the department that she is undertaking a systemic review of the use of holds and confinement at Jack Hulland Elementary School.

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**Background:****2021-22 Annual Report of the Child and Youth Advocate Office (CYAO)**

- The annual report of the CYAO includes activities of its office for the 12 months ending March 31, 2022. The report is provided to the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.
- The report references Education numerous times inclusive of two full pages, charts and trivia games.
- The report cites Education as second highest (after Family and Children Services) for advocacy issues.

**The CYAO**

- The Child and Youth Advocate operates under the authority of the Child and Youth Advocate Act (2009).
- As an independent office of the Legislative Assembly, the Advocate is accountable to children and youth in Yukon, to ensure their views, rights and interests are upheld. The Advocate serves children and youth who are eligible, or currently receiving government services and programs.
- Work of the CYAO is guided by: Yukon Child and Youth Advocate Act; UN Convention on the Rights of the Child; TRC 94 Calls to Action; UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples; Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2s+ Calls to Justice.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Child and Youth Advocate****Education**

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Hidden Valley Elementary School Systemic Review

- The CYAO has completed its review of policies, protocols and actions to ensure student safety and supports. The final report was released in October 2022. Education provided a formal response on November 23, 2022.
- The CYAO made 8 recommendations to the Department of Education, which were all accepted in principle.

Jack Hulland Elementary School Systemic Review

- On November 21, 2021 the CYAO notified the department of a systemic review regarding the Yukon government's response to reports of restraints and seclusion at Jack Hulland Elementary School.
- It was clarified between CYAO and ADM of Schools and Student Services at the time that ongoing updates and meetings were satisfactory and a review of services and supports to families may come after the RCMP completes their investigation.
- On July 14, 2022, the CYAO requested disclosure of a summary and select records provided to the RCMP as per their criminal investigation. The RCMP confirmed that the information requested is evidence in a law enforcement matter and/or criminal proceeding and release will obstruct the matter proceeding. The request may be reviewed at a future date.
- In December 2022, the CYAO met with deputy ministers from Education, Health and Social Services, Justice and the Executive Council Office to provide a one-year update.
- The Advocate reported promising practices such as interdepartmental meetings with CYAO, RCMP interview process and a parent therapeutic support group, as well as areas for further improvement such as communication with students and families at other Yukon schools, those no longer in school and also between the CYAO.

Meetings

- The ADM of Schools and Student Services meets with the CYAO and her team regularly to address student and systemic advocacy issues.
- These meetings take place regularly (scheduled monthly).

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Child and Youth Advocate****Education**

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- Members of the CYAO staff meet frequently (sometimes weekly) with branch staff and, in particular, the Director of Student Support Services to work on individual advocacy issues.

*Child and Youth Advocate Attendance Review*

- The Government of Yukon requested the Advocate's independent review be conducted under Section 15 of the *Child and Youth Advocate Act* to ensure the Child and Youth Advocate can work with partner groups that have perspectives as well as roles and responsibilities to support student attendance, including Yukon First Nations.
- Terms of Reference for the review were established. They incorporated the department's requests that the review have broad engagement, examine root causes, and provide a report tabled by the Speaker of the Legislative Assembly.
- The review focused on children 16 years and under; and included discussions with a number of partners, which is expected to have recommendations focused primarily to government. The CYAO made 14 recommendations to the Department of Education.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****2/28/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**  
**COVID-19 School Operations****Spring Session 2023**  
Education

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**Value:**

- We are committed to providing safe and healthy learning environments that foster student success.

**Recommended response:**

- We have all learned how important being at school is to the mental health and wellbeing of children and families, and we have returned to a much more normal school year.
- We are committed to keeping schools open and safe for children – especially for those who depend on a school as a reliable safe space.

**CMOH guidance:**

- The Chief Medical Officer of Health has updated COVID-19 guidance to help parents and caregivers use their best judgment in determining whether their child is well enough to attend school or other activities.
- Children who are ill – regardless of symptoms – should stay home to rest, recover, and avoid infecting others. The Chief Medical Officer of Health is also no longer requiring that students and staff wear masks or practice physical distancing.
- The decision to wear a mask or face covering is a personal choice for everyone. We support and respect these choices and we expect others to do the same.
- We will continue to use the well-established process for school-based surveillance and reporting communicable diseases. This process requires principals to notify the Yukon Centre for Disease Control when there are high numbers of absences due to reported illness.

**Session Briefing Note**  
**COVID-19 School Operations****Spring Session 2023**  
Education

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- The Department of Education follows the advice and guidance given by the Chief Medical Officer of Health, and we will continue to work closely with their office.

**Two-year recovery phase**

- We are turning our focus to a two-year recovery phase, from 2022-24, to address the impacts of the pandemic on learners.
- The Yukon Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Pandemic Recovery Plan supports learning, mental health and wellness for all, and focuses on key priorities including inclusive and special education, mental health and wellness, numeracy, literacy, and core competencies.
- As a part of this recovery plan we have created a temporary Executive Director of Inclusive Policy and Practice, to support implementation of Safer Schools Action Plan.
- We are committed to providing supports for recovery, and meeting students where they are at. We provided \$400k towards Mental Wellness supports.
- We have allocated additional funding of \$150k to outsource additional assessments. We have contracts in place to do this work.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- This is the second year of our recovery phase from the pandemic, and there are concerns about lost learning from the past three years.
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## Session Briefing Note

### COVID-19 School Operations

## Spring Session 2023

### Education

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#### Background:

- The return to school for 2022-23 is guided by the [Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Pandemic Recovery Plan](#). This plan helps schools plan and provide appropriate resources for an optimal learning environment that can also accommodate contingencies if the COVID-19 virus requires individuals, groups or entire schools to self-isolate.
- Schools have developed Operational Plans for the Reduction of Communicable Disease to integrate the essential, school-specific portions of those two documents and communicate them to families.

#### School Ventilation

- Prior to the start of the school year, all school ventilation systems are inspected, and preventative maintenance work is completed, which includes replacing filters. Filters are then changed every three months, or more often if required
- All Yukon schools started the school year with HEPA air purifiers for each classroom-sized space. By the start of the school year, 559 HEPA air purifiers had been deployed to schools across the Yukon.
- Replacement filters for all the HEPA air purifiers have been procured and are in the process of being distributed to the schools.

#### Joint Use Agreement

- The after-hours use of Whitehorse school facilities is managed by the City of Whitehorse and CSFY, through a Joint Use Agreement (JUA) with the government.
- The facility booking documents for this year have been updated to meet the necessary health and safety guidelines.

#### Approved by:

Kelli Taylor

3/21/2023

\_\_\_\_\_  
a/Deputy Minister, Department of Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****COVID-19 Two-Year Recovery Strategy****Education**

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**Value:**

- We are committed to providing all students with the supports they need for their individual recovery.

**Recommended response:**

- We recognize that the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic have not been the same for all students. For some, learning has been lost, for others, mental health and wellbeing has been negatively impacted.
- Educators are using a two-year pandemic recovery plan to support learners. The plan focuses on key priorities, including inclusive and special education, mental health and wellness, numeracy, literacy, and core competencies.
- It is important for educators to continue to meet learners where they are at, and to provide students with tailored supports.
- To understand a student's overall needs, we need to look at them academically, culturally, emotionally, and physically.

**Additional response:**

- The recovery plan continues work on RISE (Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education), implementing recommendations from the 2019 audit, decolonizing the Department of Education, and implementing the Safer Schools Action Plan.
- The Department of Education recently launched a Culturally Responsive Literacy Strategy Working group and a Culturally Responsive Numeracy Strategy Working group to develop a longer-term strategy for programming in schools.



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****COVID-19 Two-Year Recovery Strategy****Education**

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- All of this important work will support recovery for Yukon students.
- Five hundred thousand dollars is in place beginning April 1<sup>st</sup>, 2023 to support mental health and wellness for Yukon students and schools.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Learning has been lost during the pandemic due to decreased face-to-face instruction.
- Mental health and wellness of students and staff may be at varying levels due to the pandemic.
- Data on numeracy and literacy shows a decrease in overall performance during the pandemic.

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**Background:**

- The Curriculum and Assessment program budget ensures alignment of resources purchased with the Yukon Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Recovery Plan including updated resources to support literacy and numeracy.
- The Mental Health and Wellness budget provides support and resources to students which is a priority identified in the Yukon Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Recovery Plan.
- The Yukon Kindergarten to Grade 12 Education Recovery Plan – Guidelines for Schools provides direction to Yukon public schools to deliver K-12 educational programs and supports in line with territorial pandemic recovery efforts in the 2022-24 school years by:
  - acknowledging where we have been;
  - clarifying key priorities;
  - identifying supports for key priorities including working with First Nations to address the unique educational learning needs of their communities; and
  - including links to additional information and resources that can support decision-making and communication.

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**COVID-19 Two-Year Recovery Strategy**

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

3/29/2023

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Dispute Resolution Process****Education**

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**Education Appeal Tribunal: refer to TAB S107****Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response:**

- The Safe and Caring Schools Policy applies to all staff of the Department of Education, school councils and school boards, and all other members of the school community.
- The purpose of this policy is to promote the safety of people in the schools, and to ensure that all members of the school community are treated with respect and dignity.
- Our dispute resolution process encourages collaborative and restorative dispute resolution. Most disagreements or issues that arise in school communities can be resolved through courteous and respectful discussion.
- We encourage all members of our school community to first resolve the dispute with the people who are directly involved, before escalating the issue to higher levels.
- There is an expectation that everyone involved will make every reasonable effort to resolve issues in an effective and timely manner and in the best interests of all students at all times.

**Additional response:**

- Under the Education Act, and informed by the School Council Dispute Resolution Policy, school councils work with their school community to establish a specific dispute resolution process for their school.
- Student and staff privacy is legally protected. If a problem involves the behaviour of another student, teacher or staff member at the school, there are limits in what information is available.
- Information on the dispute resolution process for Yukon schools and relevant policies are available online at Yukon.ca.

# Session Briefing Note

## Dispute Resolution Process

# Spring Session 2023

Education

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Disputes arise in schools and issues become public via social media.

### Background:

- The Education Act requires each school board or council to (in consultation with the superintendent or director, school administration, and teachers of the school) establish a procedure for resolving disputes within the school community.
- Under the Department of Education's School Council Dispute Resolution Procedure Policy, school administrators are responsible for resolving disputes between the school, parents, and teachers.
- In some instances, a parent may file an appeal with the Education Appeal Tribunal.
- Yukon.ca website information about dispute resolution in schools contains the following on basic dispute resolution process:

To resolve problems in school communities, it's important to take these steps.

- a. Speak with the teacher or staff member involved.
- b. If the problem is not resolved, you can raise your concern with authorities in this order:
  - i. principal or vice-principal;
  - ii. superintendent or school council (to contact a superintendent phone the office of the superintendents 867-667-5068 or find contact information for your school council on your school's website);
  - iii. Assistant Deputy Minister of Schools and Student Services (Email the Assistant Deputy Minister of Schools and Student Services at [publicschools@yukon.ca](mailto:publicschools@yukon.ca)).

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

02/02/2023

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Education Appeal Tribunal****Spring Session 2023**  
Education

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**Dispute Resolution Process for Yukon Schools: refer to TAB SI06****Value:**

- The Education Appeal Tribunal plays a critical role in giving parents the ability to appeal education decisions, such as a suspension or an individualized education plan, they may disagree with.

**Recommended response:**

- I would like to thank the Chair, Janet Van Bibber and the other members of the Education Appeal Tribunal for their hard work to resolve issues that may arise.
- I appreciate that the Tribunal provides an opportunity for parties to work together to find mediated solutions. This has been used to successfully resolve most appeals.

**Additional response:**

- I am not able to comment on the details of a specific student's file. The tribunal process respects and upholds the confidentiality and privacy rights of students and their families.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There may be interest in the status of current appeals.

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**Background:**

- The Education Appeal Tribunal is a quasi-judicial body established by the Education Act in 1991 to hear appeals on issues related to decisions made by the department, school councils or schools.

# **Session Briefing Note**

## **Education Appeal Tribunal**

# **Spring Session 2023**

## **Education**

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### Authority

- The Education Appeal Tribunal has statutory authority to hear appeals pursuant to section 157 of the *Education Act*. The Tribunal functions as a quasi-judicial board and operates at arms-length from the government. Pursuant to the legislation, the Tribunal can hear appeals in four areas:
  1. Special Needs (section 17.1)
  2. Student Records (section 20.6)
  3. Suspensions (section 41.7)
  4. Locally Developed Course of Study (section 43.5)

### Membership

- Pursuant to the *Education Act*, the Minister is responsible for appointing “a chair, a maximum of nine other members and a secretary to the Education Appeal Tribunal”.
- Members are appointed to a length of term specified by the Minister. Currently, members are being appointed to three-year terms.
- The option exists for the Minister to appoint two rural Yukon representatives to the Tribunal.
- On April 13, 2022, Cabinet confirmed the appointments of the following members for a three-year term:
  - Janet Van Bibber, Chair
  - Kim Hardacker
  - Gwyneth Kovachik-McNeil
  - Josefina Leideritz
  - Paula Pasquali
- This in addition to Margaret Webb and Michael Riseborough, whose appointments expire in April 2024
- The current secretary has indicated she intends to step down from her role in the near future. Officials are discussing a date and a replacement with her.

### Appeal Hearings

- The Tribunal may hear appeals arising from departmental, school or school council decisions, including those affecting special needs students, suspensions, student records and locally developed courses of study.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Education Appeal Tribunal****Education**

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- Once it receives an appeal, the tribunal:
  - Confirms it is a valid appeal under the provisions of the Education Act;
  - Provides a copy of the written appeal and a summary to all parties, including the Department of Education within five days;
  - Provides the Department an opportunity to respond in writing to the appeal within seven days.
  - Determines a date and time for a pre-hearing conference within 30 days of the appeal.
- During a pre-hearing conference, the tribunal:
  - Confirms the tribunal's jurisdiction to hear the appeal; and
  - Determines if there is an opportunity for resolution before a formal hearing. This may include a mediator.
- In cases where a mediator facilitates a decision between parties, the Chair of the tribunal makes sure any decisions and/or agreements, including commitments and follow-up steps are written and signed by all parties.
- If no agreement is reached, the matter will proceed to a formal hearing.
- Decisions made during a formal hearing of the Education Appeal Tribunal are binding and are filed in the Yukon Supreme Court.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****2/2/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Fentanyl and Yukon schools**Education

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**Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority. The opioid crisis in Yukon and the declaration of a health emergency is a real and serious concern.

**Recommended response:**

- Our hearts are with the families and communities who are grieving. This impacts us all.
- We continue to remind everyone about the risks and dangers of fentanyl, which can be hiding in other drugs.
- Students learn age-appropriate information and decision-making skills about drugs, alcohol, safety and risky behaviours as part of the school curriculum. This includes learning about fentanyl.
- It is often said that the opposite of addiction is not sobriety, it is connection. We strive to have schools that are places of positive connections for students. We want students to know that school staff care for and believe in them.

**Additional response:**

- Our schools enjoy a strong partnership with the Department of Health and Social Services Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services. Schools can connect students at particular risk of harm from substance use to effective and qualified therapeutic practitioners.
- We have provided naloxone training for staff, and presentations and resources with information for students. Principals were retrained on the use of naloxone kits in May 2021.



# Session Briefing Note

**Spring Session 2023**

## Fentanyl and Yukon schools

Education

- The Government of Yukon's Opioid Action Plan includes provisions to continue working with students, staff and their families to educate them about the dangers of illicit drugs like fentanyl.

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Yukon declared a health emergency in Jan. 2022. Between Jan. 1 and December 15, 2022, the Yukon Coroner's Service confirmed 20 opioid-related deaths.

### Background:

- The Yukon's curriculum includes learning about harmful substances such as prescription medications and drugs, starting in Grade 5 for illegal drugs. Students also develop decision-making skills and learn how to make informed choices related to risky behaviors.
- In November 2018, HSS released its Opioid Action Plan. The plan includes several provisions over the next two years to increase education and information sent to students about opioids.
- Some Whitehorse schools (particularly high schools) have hosted specific presentations on fentanyl.
- Naloxone training and kits were first made available to principals in spring 2017. In spring 2021, administrators were provided with additional naloxone training and new kits.
- Schools are expected to have updated naloxone kits and trained staff at all schools in the event of an overdose at school. These kits can help save lives if someone is overdosing on fentanyl. Due to confidentiality, we are not able to specify which schools have kits.
- All Yukon high schools offer counselling at the school with support from Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services (HSS).

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**02/28/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Hidden Valley School – Supports, Reviews-Investigations,  
Legal Education**

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**Safer Schools Policies and Procedures: refer to TAB SSS06.**

**Autism Specialist Project: refer to TAB SSS01**

**Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response—CYAO report:**

- We appreciate the work of the Child and Youth Advocate.
- We accepted all of the report recommendations in principle and are committed to continuing system-wide corrective action.
- The report's recommendations have helped us re-examine, refine and enhance our existing commitments to ensure a strengthened student and child-centred approach.
- We will ensure the wellbeing of Yukon children remains at the centre of our decision-making and actions. There is nothing more important than the safety and protection of students when they are in our care.
- We have taken significant action and will continue to address the issues that have been identified in the reports that we have received to date.

**Recommended response—Supports for families and staff**

**Autism Specialist Project: refer to TAB SSS01**

- The Department of Education is aware that the Crown stayed some of the charges against William Auclair-Bellemare.
- We understand that other charges are still active and are before the court. As such, I will not be commenting on these court matters.

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Hidden Valley School – Supports, Reviews-Investigations,  
Legal Education**

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- Knowing these court matters may impact students, families and staff in different ways, we provided information to the school community reminding them of the supports available to them.
- Minister McPhee and I sent a personal apology last fall to the Hidden Valley School Community, which included a commitment to do better.
- I continue to hold up the dedicated staff at Hidden Valley who are ensuring children feel connected, supported and safe at school.
- A range of supports, including access to counselling, will continue to be available. No family will be left behind.
- Staffing support was strengthened starting in 2021.
- We've continued to provide this support in how we schedule, assign and support staff in their learning.
- We currently have a full-time Principal and a full-time Vice-Principal at the school.
- In the 2022-23 school year, we hired a dedicated Learning Assistance Teacher to serve students with neuro-diversity and to provide programming and direct teaching in collaboration with Educational Assistants, Administrators, families and fellow staff members.
- This teacher develops and implements, Individual Educational Plans (IEPs), and ensures inclusion within the school community while facilitating ongoing communication with families.
- In the 2023-24 school year, there will be an additional neuro-diversity classroom.

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Hidden Valley School – Supports, Reviews-Investigations,  
Legal Education**

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- To clarify my comment during the Supplementary budget debate on March 16, 2023: a clinical counsellor continues to be available to support students on an ongoing basis. Supports and referrals from the Child and Youth and Family Treat Team can be available at the school and outside the school.
- Clinical counselling support is important; however, it is only one aspect of the comprehensive mental health approach we take in Yukon schools.
- We will be working closely with the Hidden Valley administration and school community on their needs for the 2023-24 year.

**RCMP report:**

- Under the Safer Schools Action Plan, our government committed to working with the RCMP to create a new inter-agency agreement for the investigation of child abuse and provide training for those responsible in each department.
- And work is well underway to develop corporate policies and procedures for information sharing with the RCMP on matters involving the investigation of alleged criminal conduct by an employee.

**Safer Schools Action Plan:**

- We are also making real change to ensure we put the right policies and supports in place.
- For the Department of Education, key initiatives include enhancing our screening and hiring processes, partnering with the Canadian Center for Child Protection and Family and Children's Services to provide training to school staff on their Duty to Report, and a new Safer Schools Policy and procedures as well as Post-Incident Communications Guidance, which outlines expectations for ongoing communication with families in various scenarios.

## **Session Briefing Note**

## **Spring Session 2023**

### **Hidden Valley School – Supports, Reviews-Investigations, Legal**

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### **Education**

- We've trained all school administrators and teaching staff on these policies and procedures.
  - We are also working to ensure all school support staff and adults working in school settings, including school councils, are trained as well.
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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Recent media coverage on stayed charges against William Auclair-Bellemare.
  - The RCMP Independent Officer Review was released on October 17, 2022.
  - CYAO report *Responding to Sexualized Abuse in Yukon Schools: Review of Policies and Governmental Response* was tabled in October 2022.
  - YG response to the CYAO report was tabled on November 23, 2022.
  - A report from the Ombudsman is forthcoming.
  - An open letter was sent from HVES School Council with specific asks for
    - An additional 1.0 FTE for a 2 year term VP
    - A clinical counsellor, licensed to practice in YT, assigned to HVES for a 2 year term.
- 

#### **Background:**

##### Supports at the school

- The Crown stayed 4 of the charges against William Auclair-Bellemare for sexual offences against a student. Other charges are still active and are before the court. Families and staff were provided information reminding them of the supports available on February 15.
- The response to the school community is intentionally dynamic. All children and families are unique in how they react to various experiences and we listen to the concerns to respond in an appropriate manner with the best direct supports.
- Supports have and continue to be available to families and staff. Examples (not all) include
  - Supports coordinated as needed via the School Community Consultant, school administration and staff to services through Family and Children's Services, Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services, and Victim Services.
  - Available directly from Whitehorse-Based Private Practitioner, Marie Fast who provides emotional support and counselling for families, helps participants to focus on

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Hidden Valley School – Supports, Reviews-Investigations,  
Legal Education**

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self-care and well-being of their families, and helps parents to find ways to discuss relevant issues with their children.

- Mental Wellness and Substance Use facilitated a 6-session parent support group that involved evening sessions with a clinical counsellor and an outreach worker. This was held off-site to best accommodate the requests and privacy of families.
- The Child and Youth and Family Treatment Team has been attending the school to monitor the needs of staff, students and families; providing service to parents and families; and delivered sessions on resilience and social-emotional skills for grade 5, 6, and 7 students.
- Staff presentations on services and supports available to them, including crisis counselling services through LifeWorks and information on the broader Employee and Family Assistance program.

**Approved by:**

**Kelli Taylor**

**3/22/2023**

\_\_\_\_\_  
a/Deputy Minister, Department of Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Jack Hulland – Grove Street Concerns and Investigation  
around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion**

Education

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**Value:**

- All students and staff have the right to a safe and inclusive learning environment.

**Recommended response:**

- In the fall of 2021, allegations were raised about the use of holds, restraints and seclusion at Jack Hulland Elementary School.
- We are working to communicate with and assist students, families, and staff as much as we are able in order for them to access support and make informed decisions while also not compromising the RCMP investigation.
- A range of free-of-charge supports continue to be available to students, families and staff as we navigate these complex matters.

**Investigations and legal matters—holds and restraints:**

- We are fully cooperating with the RCMP's criminal investigation, which is ongoing, and the RCMP have communicated to families that it is being led as a priority.
- As an employer, we have an obligation and are committed to learning more about the conduct of our employees and what happened.
- These matters are complex and of a most serious nature and will take time to complete.
- Given this is an ongoing matter before the courts, we will not be commenting on the specific allegations outlined in the statement of claim filed.

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Jack Hulland – Grove Street Concerns and Investigation  
around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion**

Education

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**Requests for student records:**

- The Department of Education is fully cooperating with the RCMP as they complete their investigation.
- As a result, there are some items that are not being provided by the Department of Education due to the investigation.
- Any further questions regarding the investigation should be referred to the RCMP.
- We will work with all individuals who have requested records to provide as much information as we are able to provide to make informed decisions and to access supports.
- We do not want this to prevent families from accessing support.
- The past year has been exceptionally challenging for many members of the Jack Hulland Elementary School community and supports are available to anyone who has been affected by this.

**Administration / supporting staff:**

- There is a dedicated team of teachers and staff at Jack Hulland school, and the administrative team is focused on moving the school forward in a good way.
- An on-site counsellor has been available for school staff and teachers since November and they continue to provide supports on an ongoing basis.
- Group and individual supports will continue to be available to staff including through the Employee and Family Assistance Program with LifeWorks or Canada Life benefits.



## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **Jack Hulland – Grove Street Concerns and Investigation around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion**

Education

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- We have set clear expectations for staff behaviour at Jack Hulland. Staff have and continue to receive training in developmentally responsive and safe ways to work with students and manage student behaviours.
- We will continue to work with the school administration and school council on staff supports and initiatives.

#### **Communications:**

- We will continue to communicate information as it becomes available and where we are able to.
- We continue to remind and encourage families and staff of the resource supports available to them, including a dedicated support person that is available to help families navigate the information and supports available to them.

#### **Child and Youth Advocate Office:**

- We are working with the Child and Youth Advocate on a case-by-case basis to directly support past and present students and families of Jack Hulland School.
- We will continue to provide updates to the Child and Youth Advocate on the government's ongoing response.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- A communication was sent out on behalf of the RCMP in January 2023 advising that the investigation is on-going with the next public update scheduled to go out by the end of April 2023.
- A statement of claim was filed on October 31, 2022, naming the Yukon government and JHES School Council as defendants.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Jack Hulland – Grove Street Concerns and Investigation  
around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion**Education

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**Background:**

- In November 2021 the Area Superintendent received information from the acting school principal that there could be school-wide physical abuse of students through inappropriate use of holds and isolation rooms as a means to restrain and address student behaviour.
- Violence at the school has previously been described as student-to-student and/or student-to-teacher and largely focused on a Shared Resource Program that supports student with behavioural needs (Grove Street program).
- RCMP and Family and Children's Services were engaged on November 19, 2021, and the investigation is progressing. Production orders for records were completed to RCMP's satisfaction.
- A law group was engaged to conduct the employer's fact-finding investigation using duplicate copies of all the same materials that were disclosed to the RCMP, including Workplace Risk Assessments and other reports involving the use of holds and isolation rooms produced over the last 5 years. A Workplace Risk Assessment is required to be completed and submitted to the Student Support Services Unit when students demonstrate escalated behavior that may be harmful to others.
- The initial findings from the law group received in April 2022, suggested concerns that holds, restraints and seclusion were not used as a last resort or in situations of imminent danger, but rather for matters of non-compliance or not following the direction of staff.
- As the employer, we have an obligation to learn more and will do so.
- Education provides Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training – an industry standard training – to school staff to provide them with the tools to de-escalate situations and protect themselves and others from student outbursts.
- On February 23 and 24, 2022, the Minister approved a request from the school council to make school calendar adjustments in order to suspend classroom instruction for two days, to allow for Nonviolent Crisis Intervention (NCI) training for school-based staff.
  - This training was a priority request of the administration, school council and school community.
  - The safety of students and staff is always our first priority, and the training was in response to concerns raised about the safety of staff and students.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Jack Hulland – Grove Street Concerns and Investigation  
around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion** Education

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- Earlier training scheduled on a non-instructional day was cancelled due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- It was imperative to adjust the school calendar to offer the training when the contractor was allowed to travel.
- Section 46 of the Education Act requires that the Minister shall establish the hours of classroom instruction annually by March 31st. Ministerial Order 2022/15 enabled the Minister of Education to adjust hours of instruction to respond to community and school outbreaks of COVID-19.
- Over the two days of training, families and students requiring learning supports or who needed their child to attend school during these days were accommodated in-person.
- Completion of the NCI training resulted in staff having been provided with the knowledge and expectations for managing elevated student behaviours.
- The Child and Youth Advocate on Nov 23, 2021 indicated intent to conduct a systemic review of the use of holds and isolation at Jack Hulland. In subsequent conversations the Advocate had indicated that their preference at the time was regular updates on Department of Education's response through monthly meetings with the ADM of Schools.
- On March 30, 2022, in advance of a scheduled coordination meeting to discuss supports and communication, the CYAO issued a news release expressing "inadequate government action" in regard to the investigation.
- At the April 1, 2022 Interagency meeting, the CYAO agreed to a follow up meeting with Victims Services, H&SS, and Education to discuss the supports for the 7 children for whom they have been providing advocacy. No date was set for this meeting.
- On April 4, 2022, a letter from ADM Sikkes was sent to JHES families confirming the investigations were progressing, follow up actions at the school, and outlining the supports and contacts to discuss appropriate supports was emailed.
  - Follow up actions included the NCI training for all staff, additional VP support, Associate Superintendent assignment, and School Council work on handbook
  - Supports were:
    - School based – contact Principal
    - Child, Youth, and Family Treatment Team
    - Mental Wellness and Substance User Services
    - Victim Services

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Jack Hulland – Grove Street Concerns and Investigation  
around Holds, Restraints and Seclusion** Education

- CYAO and Student Support Services contacts were also provided to assist parents/guardians in navigating supports.
- Schools branch officials and school administration continue to work with the CYAO on a case-by-case basis to support past and present students and families directly.
- In May 2022, the Deputy Minister of Education provided staff at Jack Hulland Elementary School with a letter clarifying the employer's expectations of Educators in respect to managing student behavior.
- On May 5, 2022, information was also shared with families, and a meeting was held with participation from Victim Services, Family and Children's Services, Family Resource Unit, and Mental Wellness and Substance Use Services.
- On October 24, 2022, the RCMP issued a letter to families indicating the status of their investigations and again asked families to share any reports. Information about supports available to families was included with this letter.
- A statement of claim was filed on October 31, 2022, to the Yukon Supreme Court by two plaintiffs and their guardians against the Department of Education and Jack Hulland Elementary School Council for holds and involuntary seclusion by school staff.
- The lawsuit seeks to be certified as a class-action on behalf of all students "who were subject to holds and restraints and who were locked in a room and/or placed in seclusion" at the school between Jan. 1, 2002, and June 30, 2022.
- On January 23, 2023, Yukon Education sent out a communication on behalf of the RCMP to Jack Hulland Elementary School parents, advising that the investigation is on-going and the next public update is scheduled to go out by the end of April 2023.
- Legal counsel for the Department of Education has filed a defence to the class action lawsuit that was submitted in mid-February 2023.
- A team of leads from EDU, HSS, JUS and PSC will continue to lead the Government of Yukon response at the school and next steps.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****3/20/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Medication in Schools - Chronic Conditions** Education

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**Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response:**

- Our schools accommodate students with a wide variety of chronic and severe medical conditions, such as diabetes or anaphylaxis, and who may require medication and other care while under school supervision.
- All Yukon schools follow the Administration of Medication to Students Policy, which requires planned care and support for students with various medical conditions, including diabetes.
- School staff have a duty of care to students who are at risk from these medical conditions and require up-to-date information and guidance about their specific condition.
- These students require and receive planned care and support at school, on field trips, and while being transported to and from school to ensure their health and safety.
- A collaborative approach with each family is taken to develop a detailed and specific response plan to keep the student well.

**Additional response:**

- Departmental officials are currently working with the T1D Support Network to review the existing policy and to identify any gaps.
- There have been three meetings with the T1D network to date on how best to approach supporting students with T1D in the school setting.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Medication in Schools - Chronic Conditions** Education

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Legislative Assembly unanimously passed a motion in fall 2021 for the development of a Yukon diabetes strategy.
- The Yukon T1D Support Network (for type 1 diabetes) asked that a policy be written specifically regarding roles, responsibilities and supports for students with diabetes; this was echoed in a Public Accounts Committee submission for the 2022 hearing.

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**Background:**

- Recent meetings with the Department of Education and T1D network have focused on creating a draft procedure for students with T1D in the school setting.
- Yukon T1D Support Network's concern is based on the fact that Yukon did not have a specific type 1 diabetes policy. The department clarified that this falls under the Administration of Medication to Students Policy, which includes a specific reference to students with diabetes.
- The *Administration of Medication in Schools* Policy and related procedures outline roles and responsibilities among school staff, parents, and students regarding medical care and medication, including that:
  - These students require planned care and support at school to ensure their safety at school. This responsibility is shared among the student, their parents, school staff, and healthcare providers.
  - The parent of a child with a severe or chronic medical condition is required to inform the school of their child's condition and requirements, including providing any medication and medical devices that the student requires to the school.
  - All school staff identified to provide supervisory support to a student with a severe or chronic medical condition must be informed of the student's medical condition and the planned response to emergency situations, and must be provided with specific training and other support required to deal with medical emergencies and administer medication to the student.
  - The school bus registration form also contains information about medication and care that a student may require. This information is

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Medication in Schools - Chronic Conditions** Education

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provided to Standard Bus, and they ensure that the student's bus driver is provided with information and training to support the student.

- Earlier this year, after funding a two-year pilot program, the Government of Yukon was the first jurisdiction in Canada to provide permanent coverage for continuous glucose monitors (CGM) to youth 18 and younger with type 1 diabetes.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****02/28/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Mice at Elijah Smith Elementary School****Education**

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**Value**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response:**

- Pest control mitigations are put in place when signs of pests are discovered in Yukon government workplaces.
- The Department of Education was advised of a mice issue at Elijah Smith School this past fall and employed additional custodial and pest control services immediately.
- Following an inspection in October, Environmental Health issued a report containing recommendations or mitigations, which have all been followed.

**Additional response:**

- The presence of mice has not been fully remediated and efforts continue to ensure the school remains a safe place to work and learn.
- The department continues to coordinate any necessary additional custodial services and deep cleaning of target areas as required.
- Staff and families will continue to receive updates.
- The department has entered into a six-month monitoring contract with a pest control company, which included an initial site inspection to identify and address any potential nesting sites, as well as weekly site visits.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Concerns regarding health and safety have been brought to Yukon Association of Education Professionals by staff. Parents are contacting the school administration with concerns.
- Many schools have food and nutrition programs and there is often increased mouse activity in the fall season.
- Concerns are often raised regarding exposure to the hantavirus.



# Session Briefing Note

**Spring Session 2023**

## Mice at Elijah Smith Elementary School

Education

### Background:

- We are working with the school staff, Health and Safety Management Coordinator, Facilities Services Director and Environmental Health Services on response, prevention and remediation.
- There has been an increase in food and nutrition programs being delivered at schools. This has resulted in more food being stored in the schools and classrooms and increased the amount of compost. Both of which are attractants for pests.
- Environmental Health inspected Elijah Smith on October 18, 2022 and provided recommendations. The school was not ordered to close.
- Recommendations from Environmental Health included:
  - Increase custodial resources;
  - Limit food storage and preparation;
  - Ensure all food is stored in mouse proof containers;
  - Cease cooking in classrooms;
  - Increase the frequency of site inspections by a pest control technician; and
  - Seal mice access points.
- Staff met on October 19<sup>th</sup> to discuss the situation and learn how classroom practices will be altered. We will support staff with these measures.
- Communications were initially sent to families on October 20 and will be ongoing as we have more updates to provide.
- An Environmental Health Officer collected a specimen from the school on Friday October 28<sup>th</sup> and the Chief Veterinary Officer confirmed that specimen was a "house mouse."
- The risk of hantavirus from that species remains low.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2/2/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****School Video Surveillance**Education

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**Value:**

- The Department of Education takes protecting the privacy of Yukoners' personal information very seriously.

**Recommended response:**

- Video surveillance is used in limited situations at schools when it's deemed appropriate to ensure a safe and caring school community.
- This technology serves as an additional tool to help address incidents of concerning behaviour on school grounds, including when there are allegations of crime or acts of vandalism and destruction on school property.
- The department has a Video Surveillance Policy that follows privacy regulations and policies and outlines guidelines for records collection and destruction.
- To date there have been no examples or reports of misuse or mishandling by the department of information gathered by video surveillance technology or any breaches of privacy.
- The department outlined a clear response to the Information and Privacy Commissioner's audit on how we would address all of the 24 recommendations, with some modifications.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- In November 2022, media reported on a June 2022 Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner report on the use of video surveillance technology in schools.

# Session Briefing Note

## School Video Surveillance

Spring Session 2023

Education

### Background:

- Video surveillance technology is currently being used at the following schools operated by Yukon Education:
  - F.H Collins Secondary School
  - St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Secondary School
  - Porter Creek Secondary School
  - Ghùch Tlà Community School (Carcross)
  - École Whitehorse Elementary School
- Video surveillance technology is currently being used at the following schools operated by the commission scolaire francophone du Yukon
  - Centre scolaire secondaire communautaire Paul-Émile Mercier
  - L'École Émilie-Tremblay
- The Department of Education received a complaint in November 2021 about its use of video surveillance technology in Yukon schools. The department's response was that its use of video surveillance technology was justified.
- In early 2022, the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner decided to conduct a compliance audit to evaluate whether the personal information collected through the use of video surveillance technology in schools is adequately protected in accordance with the requirements of the *Access to Information and Protection of Privacy Act* and Regulations.
  - It is our position that our policy for records collections and destruction follows privacy regulation and policies.
- Following the investigation, the IPC submitted a [Privacy Compliance Audit Report](#) to the Department of Education on June 14, which included recommendations.
- In our follow-up response on July 8, 2022, we committed to ensuring that any new video surveillance technology in schools complies with the 24 recommendations.
- We also committed to work expeditiously to implement the recommendations in all current systems, including completing Privacy Impact Assessments for deployed technology and submitting them to the Office of the Information and Privacy Commissioner, and updating the department's video surveillance policy.

### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

2/3/2023

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Smoking and Vaping in Yukon Schools****Education**

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**Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response:**

- Yukon schools follow the Tobacco and Vapour-Free Schools Policy, which prohibits smoking on school property. This policy has been updated to apply to vaping and the use of e-cigarettes on school grounds.
- Talking to students about making healthy lifestyle choices is part of the curriculum and should be an ongoing conversation happening both at school and at home.
- Schools provide information to help young people to make good choices and keep themselves safe and healthy.

**Additional response:**

- We encourage everyone to talk to the kids in their lives to help them make healthy choices and stay safe.
- Schools and families share responsibility for ensuring students understand the risks of smoking and vaping.
- A school's response to students who are caught smoking or vaping on school property is guided by its discipline policies which are approved by each school council.
- Yukon government's Health Promotion Unit helps deliver smoking and vaping prevention information to students upon school request.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Smoking and Vaping in Yukon Schools**

Education

**Context – this may be an issue because:**

- There have been incidents of students vaping at school.

**Background:**

- Under the *Tobacco and Vaping Products Control and Regulation Act* no person shall smoke, vape or use a tobacco product in a school or on school grounds.
- The Department of Education updated the *Tobacco and Vapour Free Schools Policy* in 2019 to include language around vaping devices.
- Under the department's *Substance Abuse Policy*, smoking cannabis is not permitted on school grounds, regardless of whether it is legal.
- The Department of Education also provides information about the risks of smoking and vaping in Yukon schools as part of the school curriculum.
- There are no designated smoking areas on any school grounds; however, students sometimes smoke off school grounds in areas close to and often within sight of the school, especially at the secondary schools.
- High school administrators in Whitehorse have been working to improve the consistency of their school-based policies on vaping since the 2018-19 school year.
- In spring 2022, FH Collins High School partnered with Physical and Health Education Canada (with support from Public Health Agency of Canada) to engage in a three year-pilot project entitled STOMP. FH received a grant of \$2500 for this project.
- STOMP takes a comprehensive approach to curb tobacco use (including e-cigarettes and vaping) in students from grade 7-12. It actively engages students to co-create the initiative interventions, stigmatize practice, and target marginalized populations.

**Approved by:**

Mary Cameron

02/02/2023

Deputy Minister

Date approved

Department of Education

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan**Education

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**Value:**

- We continue to work with school communities on planning for their short, medium and long-term facility needs.

**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon's Five-year Capital Plan includes school replacement and renovation projects to ensure all buildings are safe and suitable for many years to come.
- We're pleased that work is underway on new schools in Whistle Bend and Burwash Landing and planning has started for the replacement of École Whitehorse Elementary School.
- Capital planning decisions are made based on current information and facility assessments, supplemented with education programming needs.
- Engagement with the broader Whitehorse community and partners is planned for this spring to determine a long-term plan for replacing and renovating other aging Whitehorse schools.
- The public can participate in this engagement by completing the online survey between Tuesday, March 14 to Monday, May 15, 2023, or by attending any of the public open houses in Whitehorse throughout April. A link to the survey and details for the open houses can be found at [Yukon.ca/engagements](https://Yukon.ca/engagements).
- We will continue to have conversations with Yukon school communities and the two Yukon school boards about facility needs, as we plan for future school projects.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan****Education**

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**Additional response:**

- We completed a generic design or functional plan that can be used to scale the design of multiple types of schools.
- This is now referred to as the Yukon Schools Functional Program, and the plan outlines consistent standards for school design and construction that are scalable based on school population, grades, and urban and rural contexts.
- This plan was used as the basis for design and planning for the Whistle Bend and the Burwash Landing schools. With each school design we expect a certain amount of customization to ensure the school meets the needs of the community.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Many school communities are advocating and lobbying for capital projects for various reasons (enrolment increases, facility upgrades, aging buildings, etc.).

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**Background:**

- All approved school construction and renovation projects are prioritized and managed through the 5-Year Capital Plan.
- School projects in the 2023-24 five-year capital plan include:
  - A new elementary school in Whistle Bend.
  - The replacement of an existing aging Whitehorse school has been identified as École Whitehorse Elementary School.
    - In June 2022, École Whitehorse Elementary School was identified for replacement on the Takhini Educational Land Reserve.
    - A project advisory committee has been established to facilitate collaboration and the exchange of ideas between key partners, stakeholders and the Government of Yukon.
    - It is too early to signal a timeline for the construction and occupancy of the school.
  - Modular classrooms are for short and medium-term school needs.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Building Schools – 5-year Capital Plan****Education**

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- In 2022-23 Selkirk Elementary added a modular addition rather than a third portable. This freed up an additional classroom in the school and is anticipated to be ready for occupancy in Spring 2023.
- For future years we have conducted feasibility studies and are evaluating modular classrooms at Jack Hulland or Hidden Valley, no final decision has been made.
  - Working with Kluane First Nation to relocate Kluane Lake School to Burwash Landing.
  - Ongoing stabilization work for Ross River School.
    - The approved budget for 2023-24 is \$3.6m for the mechanical work and re-leveling.
- The generic school design project was completed in the 2018-19 budget. We now have a completed Yukon Schools Functional Program that is designed to create consistent standards for school design and construction, covering all room types for schools with small conceptual drawings that can be scaled.
- The Yukon Schools Functional Program is not a full school design, but rather the conceptual design of individual spaces that make up parts of a school. We also have a replicable list of specifications that can be used. These two documents are intended to reduce the front end design time when we are planning schools and make the whole process more efficient.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****04/06/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved



**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Burwash - KLUANE Lake School - Kêts'ádań Kù**

Education

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**NOTE: Questions about tendering and build are for HPW.**

**Value:**

- As part of our commitment to reconciliation and long-term capital planning for Yukon schools, we are pleased to be working in partnership with Kluane First Nation on Kêts'ádań Kù [Kêht-sah-dun KOO]-.

**Recommended response:**

- Moving the current Kluane Lake School from Destruction Bay to Burwash Landing has been a longstanding request of Kluane First Nation.
- The Governments of Yukon and Kluane First Nation continue to uphold the Memorandum of Understanding, which outlines a shared commitment to plan and construct a new school in Burwash Landing, to be known as Kêts'ádań Kù - meaning "House of Learning".
- Kêts'ádań Kù is a priority as it will support Kluane First Nation citizens to learn and thrive in their community.
- Regular meetings of the bipartite oversight committee and the project management team continue.

**Additional response:**

- In July 2022, a Yukon Asset Construction Agreement was signed with Kluane First Nation that will provide benefits to the community through the construction of the school.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Burwash - KLUANE Lake School - Kêts'ádań Kù**Education

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- I was delighted to travel to Burwash Landing for the Infrastructure Canada's Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program announcement in September 2022 and visit the new school site with Chief Dickson.
- The construction tender date and the project completion date will be confirmed as we move forward with the project planning process.

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**Background:**

- Kluane Lake School has been located in Destruction Bay since 1961. Most of the students reside in or around Burwash Landing and Destruction Bay.
- Kluane First Nation (KFN) has requested the school be located in Burwash Landing, and they have made this request several times over the past 100 years.
- In YG's 2022-23 Five-Year Capital Plan an estimated budget of \$20 – 28 million was included for a new school in Burwash Landing. The 2022-23 Main Estimates include \$1.275 million in planning and design work for this project.
- The construction tender date and the project completion date will be confirmed subject to additional project planning.
- The school is a priority for renovation or replacement on the government's School's Seismic Mitigation Program.
- On November 13, 2015, the Department of Education and KFN entered an 'Agreement Respecting the Provision of the Public School Education Program in Destruction Bay and Burwash Landing' to identify and implement a three-year plan to provide options and planning for the establishment of a school in the community of Burwash Landing.
- In April 2016, the department began working with KFN on the planning of a new school in Burwash Landing, including site visits to determine suitable locations on non-settlement land.
- In October 2016, the firm Urban Arts was contracted by Yukon government, in consultation with KFN, to develop a Functional Plan for a new school in Burwash Landing. Work to revise this functional plan was undertaken in 2018.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Burwash - KLUANE Lake School - Kêts'ádañ Kù****Education**

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- In January 2019, the Minister of Education met with the Chief to discuss next steps on the school and discuss the budget / project scope. On Jan 18, 2019, the joint working group met, led by the Deputy Minister of Education, and determined the three options for further exploration: retrofit, lease, build.
- In November 2019, the Minister met with the Chief to confirm a school would be built in Burwash Landing. Since then technical officials have been meeting to move this project forward, including signing an MOU in June 2019 outlining a commitment to plan and construct a new school in Burwash Landing.
- The MOU includes provisions to establish a KFN/YG Oversight Committee to oversee the implementation of the MOU with a commitment for the Minister of Education and Chief to meet quarterly to ensure the goals are being met and help move items forward as required.
- In January 2021, a tender for an Owner's Advisor to provide expertise and guidance on this new school project was posted. Taylor Architecture Group (TAG) was the successful proponent.
- In August 2022, KFN provided a submission to YG for naming the Burwash School. At the General Assembly in July 2022, Kêts'ádañ Kù meaning "House of Learning" was selected by KFN citizens as the name for the new school. Education will advance a formal request for Cabinet approval as per the corporate building naming policy and will honor KFN's request in the interim.
- The site selected for the school is KFN settlement land, and lease negotiations with KFN are ongoing. These discussions are being led by Justice.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****2/2/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

# Session Briefing Note

## Busing – General

# TAB SO03 Spring Session 2023

Education

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### Special Needs Transportation: refer to TAB SO11

#### Value:

- The Department of Education provides school busing, city transit passes and transportation subsidies to families to support students travelling safely and effectively to and from school.

#### Recommended response—Transportation subsidy:

- If families live more than 3.2 km from the nearest school bus stop and the student goes to the catchment area school, they may apply for a transportation subsidy to offset the cost of driving.
- We will be reviewing the student transportation program to ensure it is supporting the needs of families and those eligible for transportation allowances.
- We recognize that students with exceptional needs may require additional support and we make every effort to accommodate student's transportation needs.

#### Robert Service Way closure:

- The recent closure of Robert Service Way impacts many bus routes.
- A message was sent out to families on April 10<sup>th</sup> noting that school bus delays can be expected when dropping off students at school in the morning and dropping off at home in the afternoon.
- We will continue to monitor the progress and communicate further with families if necessary.

#### Cancellations:

- Standard Bus is responsible for notifying schools and families when there are bus route cancellations. We are working with Standard to ensure notifications are sent out as early as possible.

# Session Briefing Note

## TAB SO03 Spring Session 2023

### Busing – General

Education

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- In some instances, routes may be cancelled for the day due to extreme weather conditions or unsafe road conditions or driver shortages.
  - Families can sign up for My School Bus Monitor to receive email updates. They can also sign up for text notification with Standard Bus.
  - We acknowledge the impact cancelled bus routes can have on families and are working with Standard Bus to find solutions whenever possible.

#### Driver shortages:

- Like many other jurisdictions, the Yukon is facing a driver shortage and we are working with the contractor, Standard Bus, to support them in their recruitment efforts.
- Efforts will be made to limit any service disruptions in Whitehorse and we will continue work with Standard Bus to develop contingency plans, which may include bringing in out-of-territory drivers and combining routes where possible.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- There have been challenges with providing busing services since the start of the pandemic.

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#### Background:

- The Department of Education works with the School Busing Committee on matters affecting the delivery of shared busing services.
- There are 41 active bus routes in Whitehorse and 12 in the communities, including Ross River. As of the start of the 2022-23 school year there were 2,102 registered riders for the school bus in Whitehorse.
- For the beginning of the 2022-23 school year, Standard Bus reported that all rural community routes were staffed.

# Session Briefing Note

# Spring Session 2023

## Busing – General

## Education

- For the 2022-23 school year families were required to submit a registration for the school bus. Registrations received up to August 15th were processed and seats assigned for the start of the school year. The deadline for registrations was June 20th.

### Act and Regulations

- The Education Act and the Student Transportation Regulations outline the Department of Education's responsibilities for student transportation.
- Transportation subsidies are mandated under s. 47 of the Education Act.
- If a student's home is more than 3.2 km by the nearest passable road from the school the student attends, the Minister must either provide transportation (i.e. busing) or an 'allowance for transportation and accommodation'.
- Under the Student Transportation Regulations (O.I.C. 1991/069) the amount of the transportation allowance (limited to one per family) shall equal the Government of Yukon car mileage rate payable to public servants to a maximum amount prescribed by the Minister.
- Under Ministerial Order 2004/10, the maximum transportation allowance payable is \$13 per day.

### Special requests

- In keeping with the Education Act and Student Transportation Regulations, student riders are first assigned a seat for transportation from home to school, and back.
- Transportation to locations other than home are beyond the criteria for school busing and are considered special requests and are considered at the beginning of the school year based on available space and existing bus routes.
- The Student Transportation Ridership Guidelines outline how we consider accommodating students travelling to locations other than their home, for example to after-school activities or daycare.

### Contract

- Standard Busing was awarded the Student Transportation school bus contracts for both Whitehorse public schools and community public schools for 2021-22, 2022-23, and 2023-24
  - These contracts went to public tender in 2021, and Standard was the successful bidder for both contracts. (Whitehorse: \$7.395 million, Community \$2.898 million; does not include field trips and non-scheduled transportation).

# Session Briefing Note

Busing – General

**TAB SO03**  
**Spring Session 2023**

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

04/11/2023

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Busing – Traffic Safety****Education**

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**Transportation Safety Plans: refer to TAB S012****Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response:**

- School buses are considered to be one of the safest modes of transportation available.
- In our current contract with Standard Bus, we have additional safety features such as strobes on the top of the vehicles and dash cameras on some vehicles.
- The Government of Yukon participates in a Transport Canada National Task Force on School Bus Safety, as Yukon's school buses must meet all the Transport Canada requirements for buses.
- At this time, the installation of seat belts on buses is not required or recommended by the task force.

**Additional response:**

- We work with Standard Bus, the RCMP and communities to promote safe driving near school buses and to reduce risks along bus routes.
- In an emergency situation on a bus, the first priority is to ensure the safety of students and staff.
- Information is shared with families, as soon as it is safe to do so.
- If parents have any concerns, they can contact their school, the Student Transportation Officer, or Standard Bus.



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Busing – Traffic Safety****Education**

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**Additional response – Transportation Safety Plans:**

- Infrastructure and parking lot access points play an important factor in assuring students and school community members can navigate school campuses safely.
- We are working with Highways and Public Works' Road Safety Unit on a Transportation Safety Plan initiative.
- Many of the on-campus recommendations from a 2018 Whitehorse School Mobility Report and additional projects identified have been implemented to increase student safety around traffic.
- The department has been working with Highways and Public Works on the development of safety materials for students and parents. The materials will be distributed by the start of the 2023-24 school year.
- I would like to remind drivers you are required under the law to stop when a school bus is letting children on and off the buses. Please make sure you do this for the safety of our children.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There has been media attention, public discussion, MLA correspondence and debate in the Legislature about school bus safety.

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**Background:**

- The regulations for physical safety requirements on school buses, including school bus seating, are set by the Government of Canada. Yukon school buses are required to meet national standards.
- All bus routes and stops are assessed on an ongoing basis.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Busing – Traffic Safety****Education**

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- The Government of Yukon increased fines and demerit points for infractions, and the department is piloting the use of dashboard cameras on certain bus routes.
- The Departments of Education, Justice, Highways and Public Works, RCMP, Standard Bus and school communities have, and continue to work to address concerns about bus safety on the highways.
- The Department of Education works with the School Busing Committee to address issues that affect shared busing services in Whitehorse.
- The RCMP continues to pay close attention in areas of concern, including the Alaska Highway.

Motion 332 and 2020 Report from the Task Force

- Motion 332 was passed in October 2019: THAT this House urges the Minister of Education, in partnership with all appropriate stakeholders, to participate in the recently announced Transport Canada assessment of seatbelt safety and continue to review school busing in Yukon, including but not limited to: (1) bus capacity and assigned seating; (2) whether the wearing of seat belts by passengers should be mandatory; (3) registration process; (4) behavioural and disciplinary policies; (5) emergency procedures; and (6) service areas and standards.
- In June 2019, the federal Standing Committee on Transport, Infrastructure and Communities published a report on bus passenger safety, which noted that buses - particularly school buses - are among the safest modes of transportation available.
- The Government of Yukon is part of a national committee (Task Force) to identify measures to further improve school bus safety in Canada.
  - The HPW Director of Transport Services has been part of the national Task Force and updates the EDU Director of Operations periodically.
  - The February 2020 report from the Task Force recommended 4 additional safety measures, but did not recommend 3-point seat belts in buses for passengers. The 4 recommendations are:
    - i. Infraction Cameras, to help prevent dangerous incidents caused by passing motorists;
    - ii. Extended Stop Arms, to further deter motorists from passing while children are entering or leaving the bus;

# Session Briefing Note

# Spring Session 2023

## Busing – Traffic Safety

## Education

- iii. Exterior 360° Cameras, as a means of better detecting and protecting children and other vulnerable road users around the exterior of the bus; and
- iv. Automatic Emergency Braking, to help reduce the severity of a collision or avoid it entirely.
- o The task force is working with partners in BC and Ontario to carry out school bus seatbelt projects.

### Operational procedures

- Following incidents, the bus drivers first work with the RCMP on scene, and submits company incident reports, which are then shared with the department.
- The department and Standard Bus then work together on specific responses such as outreach with the RCMP.
- The department coordinates with the school, Standard Bus, and RCMP to ensure the safety of students and to share current information with parents as it becomes available.
- School buses regularly stop on highways to pick up and drop off students at designated locations. By stopping on the highway, other drivers can see the bus and flashing red lights from a distance, and all vehicles are required to stop. This allows the bus to take control of the roadway, stopping vehicles in both directions so it is safe for children to cross the road.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**04/03/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Public Announcement Systems in Schools** Education

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**Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response:**

- It is important that school staff are able to communicate effectively during emergencies and during regular programming.
- We completed upgrades on public announcement systems at Elijah Smith Elementary in 2018, Grey Mountain Primary in 2019, Holy Family in 2021, and Khàtinash (Kaw keen ah sa) Community School in Teslin last summer.
- We also upgraded the public announcement systems at Porter Creek Secondary School and St. Francis of Assisi Secondary School in the 2019-20 school year.
- Recent upgrades to the Del Van Gorder School public announcement systems have been completed.
- Other schools scheduled to receive public announcement and phone system upgrades include:
  - St. Elias Community School in Haines Junction (currently under design with implementation planned for summer 2023);
  - École Émilie Tremblay in Whitehorse (currently under design with implementation planned for summer 2023); and
  - Hidden Valley Elementary School in Whitehorse (currently under design with implementation planned for summer 2023).

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Public Announcement Systems in Schools**      Education

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**Additional response:**

- Concerns about the outside audibility at Elijah Smith Elementary were due to the public announcement system amplifier, which has been replaced.
- A systems test by a local technician occurred in January 2023, which identified items to be corrected to ensure the system is functioning as required.
- Corrective actions have been identified to correct the remaining deficiencies.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Many schools use their public announcement systems in emergency protocols to communicate with their staff and students.
- Local contractors who can address public announcement system needs are limited.
- Elijah Smith School Council raised concerns with the school's public announcement system in the spring of 2022.

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**Background:**

- Schools with public announcement systems use them to make announcements to the entire school, make calls between school rooms, play signal bells and more.
- Public announcement systems are sometimes part of staff communication protocols. For example, they may use them to communicate emergency codes to all staff and students at once, or make calls from a classroom to request support from other staff.
- If a school's public announcement system is not available/functional, schools make alternative plans to communicate, such as deploying two-way radios to teachers, using megaphones or using cell phones in the interim.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Public Announcement Systems in Schools**      Education

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- Replacement of broken or aging public announcement systems is managed and prioritized in the capital planning process. For example, broken public announcement systems would take priority over aging but functional systems.
- Public announcement systems are complex networks and take time to install and connect with phones and internet.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****02/28/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Radon in Schools**Education

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**Value:**

- The health and safety of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon's radon management guidelines follow Health Canada's recommended guidelines.
- Testing and remediation has been completed for all schools.
- Any school that shows results above the recommended range is remediated and monitored until we are confident the levels are within the recommended range.
- Post-remediation testing was completed at Eliza Van Bibber, Christ the King Elementary, the Teen Parent Centre, and Holy Family Elementary School, and results indicate levels are now below Health Canada Guidelines.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The issue of radon levels in schools was raised in October 2019.

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**Background:**

- Radon is naturally occurring in Yukon. It does not pose an immediate danger to health and is only a concern if there is prolonged exposure to high concentrations over many years.
- Health Canada's recommended levels of radon concentration for acceptable indoor air quality are as follows: Below 200 Bq/m<sup>3</sup> – acceptable; Between 200 Bq/m<sup>3</sup> and 600 Bq/m<sup>3</sup> – remediate within two years; Above 600 Bq/m<sup>3</sup> – remediate within one year

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Radon in Schools****Education**

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- All Yukon schools have been tested, and schools that showed results above the 200 Bq/m<sup>3</sup> have been remediated, with follow-up monitoring until the government is confident levels are within the recommended range. All Yukon school communities have been informed about the results and if any remediation is needed at their schools. The majority had low radon readings.
- Christ the King Elementary School and Eliza Van Bibber School tested above the parameters established by Health Canada guidelines. Remediation work is now completed, and long-term testing indicates levels are now below Health Canada guidelines.
- Remediation work was completed at Jack Hulland Elementary and Nelna Bessie John School, and long-term testing confirmed that radon levels at both schools are below Health Canada guidelines.
- The Teen Parent Centre and Holy Family Elementary School had remediation work in 2018-19. Follow-up testing indicates radon levels are below Health Canada guidelines.

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

02/02/2023

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Robert Service School Expansion**Education

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**Value:**

- We continue to work with school communities on planning for their short, medium and long-term facility needs.

**Recommended response:**

- I am pleased to announce that Robert Service School hosted an opening ceremony on January 10th and programming in the modular addition commenced on January 17th.
- We look forward to seeing how these four new classrooms will complement and enhance the school's learning space.

**Additional response:**

- The delay to the start of school was due to a separate project to replace aged and deteriorated sanitary lines in the crawlspace of the school and not the modular addition project.
- The safety of staff and students is a priority.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The budget for this project increased to accommodate requests for increased classroom sizes.
- Delays were caused by supply chain issues.

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**Background:**

- Mould was found in the Robert Service School portables in July 2019.
- The portables were immediately closed and all programming was moved to the main building. The old portables were decommissioned and removed.
- The final cost for this project was \$6.4 million, and Canada provided funding under the Investing in Canada Infrastructure Program.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Robert Service School Expansion**Education

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- Regular project meetings took place and updates were shared with the school administration.
- Substantial completion was achieved in January 2022, once we attained occupancy. The warranty portion of the contract lasts one year past the date of substantial completion, or to January 2024.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****2/3/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****SPRING 2023****Ross River School**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

- The health and safety of students across the territory is a top priority for the Yukon government.
- The school in Ross River is built on changing permafrost, as is much of the community.
- Changing permafrost has contributed to the need for structural assessments and repairs over the years, but we continue to ensure the school is kept safe by mitigating structural movement through upgrades like the releveling system and by performing repairs to lessen the effects of building movement.
- The Ross River School is inspected quarterly by a multi-disciplinary team that includes an architect, a structural engineer, a geotechnical engineer and a surveyor.
- The latest building condition inspection report, received on February 22, confirmed the school remains safe for occupancy. The next inspection report is expected to be received in May 2023.

**Additional response: upcoming work**

- We are currently building a releveling system at the school that will mitigate the effects of further permafrost deterioration.
- We are also building a new modular mechanical room to replace the existing mechanical plant. The heat emitted from the mechanical plant was contributing to the deterioration of permafrost under the school.
- Work for both of these projects is currently underway. The new modular mechanical room was completed during spring break. The releveling system is scheduled to be completed this summer.

**Session Briefing Note****SPRING 2023****Ross River School**Highways and  
Public Works

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- Upcoming summer projects include lighting upgrades in the gymnasium and library.

**Additional response: General**

- The Department of Highways and Public Works creates and maintains the infrastructure that children need to learn and grow.
- Highways and Public Works ensures the school buildings and their systems are always up and running for teachers and students.
- The spaces in which children learn need to be safe, comfortable and functional and we make it a priority to ensure schools deliver on this expectation.
- The department also ensures that schools are welcoming and a true reflection of our communities.
- The physical space of a classroom and a school is an important element in creating a positive learning environment.

**Third response: General**

- The department maintains 32 schools across the Yukon. Work is underway for construction of a new school in Whistle Bend and design for the replacement of another in Burwash Landing.
- As we continue to see an increase in population in the territory, we are also seeing an increased demand on schools.
- Over the past few years, our government has been working on building new schools and upgrading existing ones to meet the needs of Yukon's students.

## Session Briefing Note

**SPRING 2023**

### Ross River School

Highways and  
Public Works

- In doing so, we have been working with local communities and Yukon First Nations to identify where new schools and modular extensions are needed.

#### Context—this may be an issue because:

- The Ross River School has been undergoing quarterly inspections to monitor for any structural issues because of changing permafrost.

#### Background:

- Permafrost conditions at the school have resulted in many structural assessments and repairs over the years.
- The contract for the installation of the releveled system, awarded to T. Moon Construction in July 2022, is \$3.55 million.
- The contract for the new mechanical room, awarded to Cube Construction in June 2022, is \$1.29 million.
- The mechanical room project will see the construction of a new modular mechanical room, which will be located beside the existing school. The existing mechanical plant located in the basement of the school will be turned off and left as a back-up. The heat emitted from the existing mechanical plant was determined to be a contributor to deterioration of the permafrost under the school.

Approved by:



April 3, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****SPRING 2023****Seismic and Schools**Education &  
Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response:**

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- Safety at our schools is a top priority and we work to proactively address safety issues whenever possible.
- Schools are regularly inspected to ensure that they are safe.
- If structural issues are identified, precautionary action is taken and mitigation work is prioritized based on a risk assessment.
- Given the evolution in seismic research, the Government of Yukon conducted studies on all Yukon schools to identify potential seismic risks and the likelihood of seismic events.
- The cross territory seismic assessments were undertaken in 2013-14. The Yukon government continues to perform seismic and structural assessments on Yukon schools as required, to ensure the safety of staff and students.
- As a result of these studies, our government has undertaken several mitigation measures.
- To date, we have addressed several structural issues – for example, repairs on roofs, floors, and walls – and many non-structural issues such as duct work, furniture upgrades and shelving.
- Yukon's last major seismic event was in 2017 and the mitigations we had in place proved effective during that event.

**Additional response:**

- The seismic upgrades go beyond the basic code requirements and are intended to bring the buildings into line with modern seismic standards.

**Session Briefing Note****SPRING 2023****Seismic and Schools**Education &  
Highways and  
Public Works

- The Departments of Highways and Public Works and Education are reviewing all Yukon school facilities and planning for the future of those facilities.
- Seismic issues are one of the many factors considered in new school design.

**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The public is interested in seismic mitigation in Yukon schools.

**Background:**

- Yukon schools were built to the building code in place at the time of construction and modern building code requirements contain increasingly stringent structural requirements.
- The type and severity of seismic issues varies from building to building and can be categorized into:
  - structural components - roof, floors, walls, foundations; or
  - non-structural components - suspended ceilings, water piping, ductwork, furniture upgrades and shelving units.

Approved by:



January 25, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

February 3, 2023

Deputy Minister, Education

Date Approved

**Session Briefing Note****SPRING 2023****Selkirk Elementary School**Highways and  
Public Works

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**Recommended response: Parking Lot**

- The Yukon government is committed to providing safe learning environments for all students.
- Over the last few years, the Department of Highways and Public Works has upgraded four school parking lots: Holy Family, Golden Horn, Christ the King and Hidden Valley School.
- A new staff parking area located behind Selkirk Elementary School is also planned for construction in summer of 2023.
- The proposed new parking lot was submitted to YESAB in fall 2022 for adequacy review and public consultation.
- Until the new parking lot is designed and constructed, Selkirk staff parking will remain at the front of the school along with visitor parking, as well as the school bus and parent drop off areas.
- Design work for the new parking lot and drop-off area is scheduled to be completed in April 2023.
- The design has allowed for the future installation of electric vehicle charging stations at all parking stalls. The design is also considering expanded bike parking stalls for active transportation users.
- The parking lot work will be tendered after design and final approvals.

**Additional response: School Addition**

- Construction of an addition to the school is scheduled to be completed in April 2023.



**Session Briefing Note****SPRING 2023****Selkirk Elementary School**Highways and  
Public Works

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- This addition has allowed for the expansion of the French Immersion Program and freed up a classroom for Grade 7 students.
- Two modular classrooms were previously completed for Selkirk Elementary School in 2020 and 2021.

**Third Response: Selkirk Storm Water project**

- The tender for the storm sewer replacement and connection and road improvements was awarded to Norcope Enterprises in 2022. This project has been managed through Community Services.
- The project will see the installation of a new storm water line that will carry run-off from the future parking lot offsite.
- The installation needs to happen to minimize the risk of flooding in Riverdale and protect the drinking water aquifer in the area.
- The installation of the new storm water infrastructure is targeted for completion in Summer 2023.

**Additional response: General**

- The Department of Highways and Public Works creates and maintains the infrastructure that children need to learn and grow.
- Highways and Public Works ensures the school buildings and their systems are always up and running for teachers and students.
- The spaces in which children learn need to be safe, comfortable and functional and we make it a priority to ensure schools meet this expectation.

**Session Briefing Note****SPRING 2023****Selkirk Elementary School**Highways and  
Public Works

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- The department also ensures that schools are welcoming and a true reflection of our communities.
- The physical space of a classroom and a school is an important element in creating a positive learning environment.

**Third response: General**

- The department maintains 32 schools across the Yukon. Construction is underway of a new school in Whistle Bend and design for the replacement of another in Burwash Landing has begun.
- As we continue to see an increase in population in the territory, we are also seeing an increased demand on schools.
- Over the past few years, our government has been working on building new schools and upgrading existing ones to meet the needs of Yukon's students.
- In doing so, we have been working with local communities and Yukon First Nations to identify where new schools and modular extensions are needed.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Selkirk Elementary School parking lot project has been deferred since 2019, as the City of Whitehorse identified a need to install new storm water infrastructure to carry run-off from the future parking lot offsite.

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**Background:**

- The proposed parking lot is within the City of Whitehorse's aquifer protection zone, and existing storm water infrastructure in the area is at capacity. The new

**Session Briefing Note****SPRING 2023****Selkirk Elementary School**Highways and  
Public Works

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storm water infrastructure was required before any further construction in the area.

- The City of Whitehorse has developed an Active School Travel design for Selkirk Street to encourage active transportation, enhance road safety, and improve air quality by reducing greenhouse gasses made by vehicles.

**Approved by:**

April 6, 2023

Deputy Minister, Highways and Public Works

Date Approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **Special Needs Transportation**

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**Busing—General: refer to TAB SO03**

**Value:**

- The Department of Education provides transportation to support students with special needs to travel safely to and from school.

**Recommended response:**

- The safety and wellbeing of our students is a top priority, and we expect the same from contractors operating on behalf of Government of Yukon.
- The Department of Education is currently supporting students with special needs by providing transportation through our bus contractor, Standard Bus, and through other means, such as transportation subsidies or taxi service.

**Additional response:**

- For some families, transportation challenges can impact student attendance.
- The Department of Education explores all available safe transportation options with families to find the best solution to meet the students' and families' needs.

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**Context – this may be an issue because**

- Taxi safety and accessible vehicles continue to be a high profile concern in Whitehorse.
- A contract with a local cab company was terminated early, on January 7, 2022, due to non-compliance with performance requirements.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Special Needs Transportation**

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**Background:**

- A local cab company was contracted with the Department of Education from August 12, 2019 to March 31, 2022. They were awarded a three-year contract through a Request for Bids process in 2019 to provide transportation for students with exceptional needs in Whitehorse.
- 4 students with exceptional needs were accessing the special needs transportation through the company during the 2021-22 school year.
- Throughout the fall of the 2021-22 school year, Department of Education began to experience issues with the company related to contract performance requirements.
- After attempts to communicate and resolve the non-compliance, a final notice was issued to the company in December 2021. No response was received and as such, the contract was terminated early in January 2022.
- Alternative arrangements, with another local cab company, were made for students with special needs beginning January 17, 2022, and were in place for the remainder of the 2021-22 school year.
- Tender documents were issued for the provision of special needs transportation and a successful bid was received by a different company.
- Upon meeting with department staff and receiving the draft contract the successful bidder notified that they could no longer meet the contract specifications.
- The company that began providing this service in January 2022 continues to provide the service for the 2022-23 school year until a longer-term arrangement is in place.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****02/28/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Transportation Safety Plans****Spring Session 2023**  
Education

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**Value:**

- The health and safety of students and staff remains our top priority.

**Recommended response:**

- We understand the importance infrastructure and orientation plays in ensuring students and school community members can navigate campuses safely.
- In 2018, we worked with the City of Whitehorse to review infrastructure surrounding Whitehorse schools and identify projects that could enhance safety.
- Many of the on-campus recommendations from the 2018 School Mobility Review, as well as additional projects identified, have been implemented. These include:
  - New parking lots and parent drop-off areas at Christ the King, Golden Horn, Holy Family, and Hidden Valley schools.
  - Bus loop and parent drop-off at the north side of Selkirk Elementary School.
  - Enhanced crosswalks on 12<sup>th</sup> avenue, and additional signage on Pine and Fir streets.

**Additional response:**

- The development of active safety transportation plans has been identified as a key government priority.
- Currently we are working with the Road Safety Branch of Highways and Public Works to:
  - develop a safety activity booklet for students; and,

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Transportation Safety Plans****Education**

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- develop a school-specific parent handout that will include information on how to navigate the campus safely.
- The materials will be distributed by the start of the 2023-24 school year.
- This initiative is being funded through existing budgets.
- The Yukon government continues to invest in infrastructure to enhance safety, including new parking lots, additional signage, and better lighting.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Department is planning a public engagement on school capital and transportation safety and progress on this mandate item may be raised as part of the engagement by school councils.

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**Background:**

- The City of Whitehorse partnered with the Department of Education to conduct a School Mobility Review of school zone safety.
- Stantec was hired for the review and visited sites from May 28 to 31, 2018, placing focus on 6 priority sites which included Christ the King (CKES), Jack Hulland (JHES), Elijah Smith (ESES), Whitehorse Elementary (EWES), Holy Family (HFES), and Selkirk (SES). They identified some on-campus and off-campus opportunities for improved safety.
- School communities have expressed concerns with adjacent infrastructure and requested upgrades in the past (example: 12<sup>th</sup> avenue in Porter Creek crosswalks)
- During each site design process school communities are consulted.
- The development of active safety transportation plans has been identified as a key government priority
- When concerns are raised about crosswalk safety the Department of Education works with the City of Whitehorse on efforts to mitigate risk and address concerns.

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**Transportation Safety Plans**

**Education**

- The Department of Education works closely with HPW Transport Services on public awareness campaigns to enhance the safety of students as they commute to school.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**4/26/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****WHISTLE BEND School**Education

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Questions about tendering and build are for HPW.

Whistle Bend School Council: refer to TAB EP03

**Value:**

- We are building the first new Whitehorse elementary school in over 20 years in Whistle Bend. This will provide students a modern learning environment and support a thriving and growing community.

**Recommended response:**

- Construction is underway and is expected to be completed in the winter of 2023-24.
- In preparation for the new school, a new Whistle Bend School attendance area has been created.
- This attendance area is based on the city boundaries for the subdivision, plus portions of the previous Takhini Elementary School area, which is now being governed by the First Nation School Board.
- I welcome the members of the newly established Whistle Bend Elementary School Council.
- The school council will have a role guiding aspects of the school build and will assume regular school council duties, such as hiring a principal, once the school is closer to completion.

**Additional response:**

- The Whistle Bend School is a key investment, with construction scheduled to be completed during the 2023-24 school year.
- A \$42.8 million design-build contract was awarded to Ketza Construction Corporation.
- The 2023-24 Main Estimates include \$20.3 million for construction of the school, with a total capital requirement budgeted at \$52.8 million.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****WHISTLE BEND School****Education**

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**Context**—this may be an issue because:

- Throughout this project, questions have been raised about overall project delays and budget increases.
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**Background:**

- As part of the capital planning process, Education, the Project Advisory Committee, EMR's Land Management Branch and Highways and Public Works identified Lot 333 as a suitable location in Whistle Bend for the school.
- A contract for Owner's Advisor services was awarded to Colliers Project Leaders.
- The Design-Build tender was published March 2021 and closed on May 19, 2021.
- Education established a Project Advisory Committee (PAC), which met regularly throughout the design phase of the project.
- Members of the PAC included: Whistle Bend Community Association, Ta'an Kwäch'än Council, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, and City of Whitehorse; as well as Yukon government representatives from Education, Community Services, and Highways and Public Works. It was co-chaired by a Department of Education representative and a nominated representative of the PAC.
- The design builder completed the design and it followed the design and intent of the design that was tendered out.
- The design includes gender-neutral washrooms.
- A tender for the supply and delivery of classroom furniture closed on January 24<sup>th</sup> and contract details are being worked on with the successful bidders.
- An attendance area has been established and an election for the Whistle Bend School Council took place in November to align with the First Nation School Board trustee elections conducted by Elections Yukon.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2/28/2023**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project** Education

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**Whitehorse School Replacements Long-Term Capital Planning: refer to TAB SO15**

**Value:**

- Our government is investing in school infrastructure.
- École Whitehorse Elementary School has been identified for replacement with a new, modern facility that will meet the needs of the community for years to come.

**Recommended response:**

- École Whitehorse Elementary School was originally built in the 1950s and is the top priority for replacement among Whitehorse schools.
- The current facility is not able to meet current and future programming and community needs, including access to spaces for innovative, inclusive, and experiential learning.
- The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is a central location that can accommodate French Immersion students from around Whitehorse.
- The Department of Education has established a Project Advisory Committee to facilitate collaboration and the exchange of ideas between key partners, stakeholders and the Government of Yukon. This group meets regularly.
- Project timelines will be determined as further planning work is undertaken.
- Moving Whitehorse Elementary School to the Takhini Educational Land Reserve does not preclude having a downtown school in future.
- There are a number of schools in the downtown right now – the Wood Street Centre, the Individual Learning Centre, the Aurora Virtual

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project**

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School. All operate out of downtown and are an important part of our portfolio of schools.

**Additional response:**

- The government has Educational Land Reserves identified for schools.
- The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is a large parcel of land, serviced, appropriately zoned and provides a central location that has better access to green space desired for modern learning.
- An initial step in this work is to identify potential locations for the future school on the Takhini educational reserve, at which point engagement with the First Nation School Board and Softball Yukon will occur.
- Engagement with the broader Whitehorse community and partners will inform the long-term plan for replacing and renovating aging Whitehorse schools.
- The public can participate in this engagement by completing the online survey between Tuesday, March 14 to Monday, May 15, 2023, or by attending any of the public open houses in Whitehorse throughout April. A link to the survey and details for the open houses can be found at [Yukon.ca/engagements](https://Yukon.ca/engagements).
- In October 2022, I met with downtown residents who are concerned about having an elementary school in the downtown core. This information will feed into the spring engagement, and will be considered as the long-term plan is developed.
- The Project Advisory Committee has designated seats for the following:
  - Whitehorse Elementary School Council

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project** Education

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- Whitehorse Elementary School Administration
- City of Whitehorse
- Government of Yukon
- Ta'an Kwäch'än Council
- Kwanlin Dün First Nation

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- MLAs have been vocal about the need to keep a school in the downtown core. The Minister met with concerned downtown residents on October 21, 2022.
  - Softball Yukon is concerned about impact to ball diamonds located on the Tahkini education reserve.
- 

#### **Background:**

- École Whitehorse Elementary School was originally built in the 1950s and is the oldest currently operated school in the Yukon.
  - Renovating or replacing the current facility on site are not viable options.
  - There have been issues raised with the current École Whitehorse Elementary School regarding the capacity of the gymnasium and its egress, the number of washrooms available on the main floor, IT infrastructure, energy efficiency, lack of modern learning spaces, seismic rating, needed build code upgrades and overall accessibility.
  - Among other concerns such as lot size and suitability, building on the same downtown site would require costly and prohibitive decanting strategies (moving students) for 2-3 years minimum to accommodate build.
  - The Project Advisory Committee meetings have occurred on October 3<sup>rd</sup>, November 10<sup>th</sup>, and December 9<sup>th</sup> 2022, and on February 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023.
  - The Project Advisory Committee will provide the department with input on key aspects of the school's planning and design, including ways the school can help to meet community needs in terms of functionality, cultural components, and community space.
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**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project**

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- The School Community, Takhini area residents, Association franco-yukonnaise, Canadian Parents for French, other relevant organizations and the general public will be encouraged to provide feedback on the project at key milestones in the project's design.
- Site selection on Takhini Education Reserve.
  - The Takhini Educational Land Reserve is one of the largest in Whitehorse and has enough room for two schools.
  - There are not a lot of other sites that are centrally located and would meet the needs of a new school; there is not a lot of vacant land in general that is centrally located.
  - To look at a different site would entail having to go through lengthy territorial and municipal zoning processes, followed by those sites needing to be serviced (sewer, electricity etc.); this is not a viable option given the urgent need to replace school infrastructure.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****03/16/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-term capital planning**

Education

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**Whitehorse Elementary Replacement Project: refer to TAB SO14**

**Value:**

- In addition to the Whistle Bend, Burwash Landing, and École Whitehorse Elementary school builds, we are planning for more investments in school infrastructure.

**Recommended response:**

- It's important that we ensure the portfolio of schools meets the demands of our growing population and provides modern learning environments for students to learn and grow for years to come.
- A public engagement will start this spring, and it will inform the long-term plan for replacing and renovating aging Whitehorse schools.
- We want to hear from the public and school communities to better understand their user experiences with their school facilities and how to better meet the K-12 programming needs.

**Additional response:**

- We will continue working closely with the two Yukon school boards, the First Nation School Board and the Commission scolaire francophone du Yukon, on their vision for education and capital needs.
- As part of the engagement, we will also be having conversations with Kwanlin Dün First Nation and Ta'an Kwäch'än Council.
- We continue to invest in all our schools across the territory and conversations about capital projects in rural schools will continue at the community level.

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Whitehorse School Replacements – Long-term capital planning**

Education

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The public engagement was publicly communicated to start in the fall of 2022.

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**Background:**

- The purpose of the engagement is to:
  - Build relationships with school communities;
  - Inform Yukoners about the school capital planning and development process; and
  - Collect stakeholder feedback on their ideas and considerations for a 21<sup>st</sup> century learning environment.
- The results of this engagement will inform future development of an updated Whitehorse school replacement plan, and a work plan for small and medium renovations for Whitehorse schools.
- The public engagement has been delayed from fall 2022 to spring 2023 as more time was required to secure a local contractor.
- École Emilie-Tremblay was the last elementary school built in Whitehorse and opened in 1996.
- The Whistle Bend Elementary School will be completed during the 2023-24 school year.
- The French First Language Secondary School Community Centre, Centre scolaire secondaire communautaire Paul-Émile Mercier (CSSC Mercier) opened its doors to students in November 2020.
- Short-term measures such as portables have been added to several Whitehorse schools to alleviate enrolment pressures.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**27/02/2023**

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**Deputy Minister, Department of Education**

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**Date approved**



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Autism Specialist Project**Education

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**Hidden Valley School-Supports, Reviews-Investigations, Legal: refer to TAB HOT06/S109**

**Value:**

- The 2019 Audit and the final Report of the Review of Inclusive and Special Education tell us that we have to rethink how we're supporting students and delivering timely, effective supports for their learning needs.

**Recommended response:**

- There is a growing need for specialized programming support to students on the autism spectrum across the territory.
- The position for Itinerant Teacher for Autism had been posted three times with no candidates meeting the essential qualifications.
- For the 2023-2024 school year we will dedicate this FTE specifically to Hidden Valley Elementary School to continue neurodiverse programming.
- The purpose of this position is to support the students who have been successful in this program and will help the school and teachers develop and deliver inclusive programming in all schools.

**Additional response:**

- We intend to work with parents and partner organizations – such as Autism Yukon – to help us in the development and implementation of neurodiverse programming to better support all teachers and support staff in a school to increase inclusive practice.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Autism Specialist Project**Education

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- This Itinerant Teacher for Autism position stems from requests from a school with a proportionately high number of students with autism. would spend.
  - This is a new and creative programming approach in providing supports in line with the recommendations from the final report of the Review of Inclusive and Special Education.
  - We want to be responsive to the growing number of Yukon students who are being diagnosed through the Child Development Centre (Pre-school Diagnostic Clinic) and Health and Social Services, Disability Services (School-aged Diagnostic Clinic).
- 

**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- This Itinerant Teacher for Autism position remains unfilled at this time and there is concern of parents and advocates that the qualifications and experience required in the poster cannot be found in a teacher skill set. The poster was created using qualifications and experience from similar positions in other school jurisdictions.
  - For the 2022-2023 school year HVES was able to hire within their teacher FTE a LAT that is supporting the development and implementation of programming for students on the spectrum as well as students with other neuro diverse needs
  - The Child and Youth Advocate, MLAs and families at Hidden Valley Elementary are calling for more EAs and specialized programming supports.
  - Some parents are concerned that when support personnel, who have been successfully working with their child, change positions there is a lack of well documented programming and strategies that enable continued success for their child.
  - Autism Yukon has raised concerns about the under reporting of the prevalence of autism spectrum disorder in the territory based on the National Survey Report published in 2018.
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**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Autism Specialist Project**

Education

**Background:**

- There is a recognition of the increasing prevalence of students in the Yukon with a diagnosis of autism spectrum disorder.
- This change in FTE does not take away from the other specialized supports offered to Hidden Valley Elementary School or other schools from the Student Support Services unit.
- Evaluation criteria for neurodiverse programming will be established to determine next steps.
  - Check ins at 6 months will provide opportunity to hear from parents and partners.
  - Evaluation at 1 year will provide opportunity to evaluate student achievement and connect to IEP goals.
- The position for Itinerant Teacher, Autism has been posted three times with no candidates meeting the essential qualifications.
- In 2024-2025 school year we will continue with efforts to recruit a qualified candidate to have an Itinerant Teacher for Autism based out of the Student Support Services Unit.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****2/28/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Learning Plans (IEPs, SLPs, BSPs)**Education

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**CASA Agreement – IEP Reinstatement: refer to TAB SI02****Value:**

- Our goal is to provide students with educational programs that meet their learning needs.

**Recommended response:**

- No matter what type of learning plan a student has, educators are aware of the plan and the supports and strategies that the student requires.
- If school staff require any assistance to implement the strategies, they can seek help from the school administration, School Based Team, and/or the Student Support Services unit.
- At any time, parents and guardians are encouraged to bring forward concerns to their school to ensure a student is being effectively supported.
- We are developing criteria and prioritizing students who need assessments. We will make sure that any student who needs an assessment will have it done within six months.

**Additional Response—RISE:**

- We are reviewing all of the services and supports for inclusive and special education, including the development and delivery of learning plans.
- There is currently a Community of Inquiry, made up of our education partners and department staff, that is looking specifically at Individualized Education Plans, or IEPs, as part of the work plan for Reimagining Inclusive and Special Education.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Learning Plans (IEPs, SLPs, BSPs)****Education**

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- This Community has been tasked to “Update and implement a consistent IEP template, process and structures that incorporate student voice and create accountability structures around IEP’s.”
- If assessments are not able to be done by our Educational Psychologist, we will contract this work.

**Types of learning plans**

- There are three types of learning plans available in Yukon: Individualized Education Plans, Student Learning Plans, and Behaviour Support Plans.
- All learning plans are designed to provide the learning supports individual students need to be successful in school. Students may need more specific supports, modifications or adaptations to their learning.
- The type of learning plan a student has in no way limits the types of learning supports that are available to the student.
- We will provide all students in need of special education with the option of an IEP.
- Information about the supports for students with diverse abilities or special needs, and how they are provided, is available on Yukon.ca.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Questioned about IEPs were received during the PAC hearing in January 2022 and it was suggested regular meetings with families and plan updates are not happening.
- The updated CASA commits the department to provide, complete, and deliver the final report for psychoeducational assessments necessary to obtain an Individualized Education Plan (IEP) within six months of referrals from teachers, administrators or physicians. If the Government is unable to provide the assessment directly within

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Learning Plans (IEPs, SLPs, BSPs)****Education**

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this timeframe, it shall cover expenses incurred by parents to obtain the assessment externally

- Also under CASA: We will provide all students in need of special education with the option on an IEP.
- 

**Background:**Student Learning Plans (SLPs) and Behaviour Support Plans (BSPs)

- These plans typically are for students who need 'adaptations' to their education programs in order to meet the learning outcomes of the prescribed curriculum.
- These students do not have special educational needs, although they do require specific learning supports in order to reach their maximum potential.
- These adaptations are designed to 'level the playing field' for a student so that the student can successfully learn the prescribed curriculum.
- BSPs set out the adaptations required for students who demonstrate behaviours that are not expected in the school environment, but have not been deemed to be the result of special educational needs.
- The supports and adaptations that are put in place depend on the specific needs of the student. Examples include: allowing additional time to complete tasks, allowing the use of a calculator in math to support numeracy, providing access to audio books to support literacy, or behaviour supports such as scheduled breaks throughout the day to help self-regulate.
- Students on these plans may still access other supports such as assistive technology, speech therapy, etc. depending on what they need.
- Students with SLPs and/or BSPs have their plan documented in the Student Information System and their progress is reported.
- Students with SLPs and BSPs are generally expected to be able to graduate with a Dogwood diploma.

Individualized Education Plans (IEPs)

- IEPs are typically used for students who have been determined to have special educational needs and therefore require an individualized curriculum with modified or adapted learning outcomes to support those special educational needs. IEPs can also be used for gifted students.

# Session Briefing Note

**Spring Session 2023**

## Learning Plans (IEPs, SLPs, BSPs)

Education

- IEPs can be modified or adapted. It will also state how the student will be supported and set out the students goals.
- Having an IEPs does not automatically mean a student will be assigned an Educational Assistant (EA). There is a separate process to ask for EA support for a student.
- Principals are responsible for ensuring the learning goals of IEPs are being met, and that the plans are evaluated and updated at least three times a year.
- The Learning Assistance Teacher (LAT) case manages IEPs within the school, and tracks IEP progress as a student moves between different grade levels and teachers.
- Students with IEPs and their learning goals are tracked in the student information system.
- Teachers are responsible for the implementation of an IEP's goals and objectives and the supports and interventions
- The central administration staff are monitoring that IEPs are being updated by each school at a minimum of 3 times a year. We are currently focused on using the data from the student information system to produce more relevant and meaningful reports on IEPs to help to monitor these updates.
- We continue to support and train teachers, LATs and administrators on how to communicate student learning for those students who are on an IEP.
- Each student is unique. Some students with an IEP are eligible to graduate with a Dogwood diploma, while others receive an Evergreen Certificate.
- An Evergreen Certificate is intended to celebrate the success in learning that is not recognized as the student graduating as they are unable to receive the required courses to graduate with a Dogwood Diploma
- An Evergreen Certificate recognizes the accomplishments of students with special needs and an Individual Education Plan (IEP), who have met the goals of their education program, other than graduation.
- Communication with students and their parents/caregivers is key in determining graduation planning.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**03/07/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and  
Education Act Amendment Implementation** Education

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**Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response:**

- All students and staff in Yukon public schools have the right to feel safe and included.
- They also have the right to be treated with respect and dignity regardless of their sexual orientation, gender identity, ancestry, place of origin, ethnicity, citizenship, religion, age or ability.
- School authorities work with their entire school community to develop and implement proactive strategies that support the inclusion, respect and dignity of 2SLGBTQIA+ students and their families.

**Action plan:**

- To further support 2SLGBTQIA+ students, the Department of Education will review and update its Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity (SOGI) Policy, as outlined in LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan.
- In our work to implement and evaluate the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity, or SOGI, Policy we will continue to partner with students, educators and other members of the 2SLGBTQIA+ community.
- Schools may develop school-based procedures and strategies under the umbrella of the Department of Education's SOGI Policy, to ensure that 2SLGBTQIA+ students are treated with respect and dignity at all Yukon public schools, which includes publicly funded Catholic schools.



**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and  
Education Act Amendment Implementation** Education

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- As part of our SOGI policy review, we will look at the best ways to support schools to implement the policy in schools.
- As Minister of Education and Women and Gender Equity Directorate, I am fully committed to implementing the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan.

**Education Act Amendments:**

- In Spring 2022, the Government of Yukon was pleased to support amendments to the Education Act to promote equity and non-discrimination and to ensure that all Yukon schools have safe spaces for 2SLGBTQIA+ students in the form of activities or organizations.
- At the beginning of the current school year all school counsellors were provided with information on the Education Act amendments, as well as copies of the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity and Safe and Caring Schools policies.
- School administrators were provided with information about their legislative responsibilities, as well as reference materials and resources.
- Counsellors and administrators were also provided with local and national SOGI and Gender and Sexuality Alliance information.
- Several Yukon schools have Gender and Sexuality Alliances and other 2SLGBTQIA+ initiatives.
- We will continue to encourage and support schools to meet their legal obligations to support 2SLGBTQIA+ students.

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and Education Act Amendment Implementation**

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#### **Additional response—Christopher West:**

- The Department of Education did not, nor will we, invite and endorse Christopher West to speak to Yukon educators, at any school or professional development event.
- We do not support speakers for professional learning whose ideologies and positions do not uphold the principles in:
  - the *Education Act*;
  - the Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy;
  - the Safe and Caring Schools Policy; and
  - the *Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Protection Act*, which bans conversion therapy.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The media has reported on Porter Creek GSA's concerns as outlined in their letter from October 11, 2022 which calls on government to immediately: 1. implement a modernized SOGI policy in Yukon Schools. 2. ensure that the provisions of Bill No. 304 are being adhered to in all Yukon Schools. 3. ensure that Christopher West is not permitted to speak to Yukon Educators. 4. provide 2SLGBTQIA+ Cultural training to Yukon Educators.

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#### **Background:**

##### Christopher West

- In October 2022, Schools and Student Service Branch heard from a school principal regarding concerns that the Catholic Diocese of the Yukon allegedly put Christopher West's name forward for discussion for professional development session(s) in May 2023.
- On October 13, 2022, the Catholic Episcopal Corporation emailed the department, indicating that "There was no decision made to invite Mr. West and he was

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, SOGI Policy and  
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neither contacted nor booked by the Catholic Episcopal Corporation to speak at any event.”

LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan and SOGI Policy

- Yukon schools have a number of universal, stand-alone washrooms available, and we are working to ensure that all school facilities have stand-alone or gender-neutral washrooms. Building standards have now been updated to ensure new schools will include gender inclusive washrooms.
- In the LGBTQ2S+ Inclusion Action Plan, released in July 2021, the Department of Education made a number of commitments, including to update the ‘Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy’ within one year.
- The updates are intended to address policy issues such as use of a student’s correct gender pronouns, update terminology to be trans-inclusive, address gender-identity inclusion in sports, and clarify points of contact and responsibilities at the department and school levels.
- On March 23, 2022, the opposition asked the Minister to commit to engaging with the school community to update the SOGI policy before the end of the current school year (June 2022).

Education Act

- Amendments to the *Education Act* make it a legal requirement for Principals to ensure that initiatives and activities in schools are inclusive of gender identity, gender expression, and sexual orientation.
- Education has not normally kept track of school-based strategies that support such initiatives, and an assessment is underway.
- The funding agreement for Catholic schools in Yukon accommodates religious instruction, but emphasizes that they are publicly supported schools with the same responsibilities as other schools, including following responsibilities outlined under SOGI Policy.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****04/19/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Mental Health Supports for School Staff and Students**

Education

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**Comprehensive Mental Health Approach: refer to TAB RI01**

**Value:**

- The health, safety, and well-being of staff and students is our first priority. Supporting employee and student wellbeing is a crucial part of our work towards creating an engaging and inclusive educational environment.

**Recommended response:**

- The next two years will be about addressing the impacts of the pandemic, as outlined in the Department of Education's K-12 Pandemic Recovery Plan.
- We are working to develop a Yukon Schools Mental Health and Wellbeing Approach for students that:
  - Includes prevention as well as developmental, cultural and clinical responses;
  - Creates connections to mental health and wellbeing activities provided by partners and stakeholders; and
  - Aligns with the Yukon Mental Health Strategy.
- The Main Estimates include \$500,000 for Mental Health Supports in schools in the 2023-24 budget in recognition of the increased mental health and wellness needs of students.
- Meeting the mental health needs of students requires flexibility in how we approach meeting them where they are at.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Mental Health Supports for School Staff and Students**Education

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- This can include raising awareness of mental well-being for all students through inclusive, culturally appropriate programs, to targeted services for acute mental health challenges.
- We will continue to work with School Councils, First Nation governments and partners, including youth, to determine how best to:
  - coordinate student supports and access to service;
  - provide additional training for school counsellors;
  - enhance student outreach and awareness; and
  - offer training and supports to school staff in developmentally responsive approaches to mental wellness and awareness of mental wellness needs.
- We continue to offer ongoing training and access to confidential counselling services to staff.

**Additional response—Students:**

- Our decision to prioritize in-person learning, except where unsafe due to staff shortages or public health, was motivated by our increasing knowledge of the negative effects the pandemic has had on many students' mental health.
- Conversations about mental health are important.
- Through increased awareness, our curriculum, and developmental supports, we are providing students and staff an understanding of mental health.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Mental Health Supports for School Staff and Students**Education

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- This includes teaching them the language to talk about it and where to seek support.
- School counsellors support students in achieving their personal, social, emotional, and academic development, and their career potential.
- Through the Yukon's school curriculum, students learn about social-emotional skills, decision-making about their health and safety and strategies to strengthen their resilience and wellbeing.
- For acute mental health challenges, school-based staff help students and families connect with the most appropriate supports that are available within a community- including clinical counselling services.

**Staff:**

- Throughout the pandemic, we have provided opportunities for ongoing training and supports for administrators and school staff to help recognize and respond appropriately when individuals or colleagues may be struggling to cope.
- In February, school administrators participated in the Working Health Works training to help improve their understanding and skills in supporting mental health in the workplace
- We offer all employees and their families a range of confidential and expert help and well-being services through the Employee and Family Assistance Program and through their extended health benefits as employees of the Yukon Government.

## **Session Briefing Note**

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# **Mental Health Supports for School Staff and Students**

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- The Employee and Family Assistance Program provides counselling and critical incident services, as well as nutritional, financial and wellbeing services to get support to deal with life's challenging situations.
- When school staff are dealing with critical events, we work with LifeSpeak to help deploy counselling resources for support and debriefing of staff.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There is constant public conversation and demand for more mental health supports – especially for youth – in light of the pandemic and the opioid crisis.
- There have been recent calls to staff a clinical counsellor in each Yukon school.

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### **Background:**

- Education is working on initiatives that are focused on both prevention and intervention measures to support students and staff.
- We are also working closely with Boys and Girls Club (BGC) Yukon to implement the recommendations from the Youth Calls to Action- Summit 2021
- Funding in 2022-23 fiscal year for Mental Health Support for Schools is as follows:
  - Yukon Mental Health and Wellbeing Approach \$100k
  - Ready to Learn Schools \$220K
  - Enhancing the School Counsellor Program \$50k
  - BGC Yukon Mental Wellness Kits \$20k
  - Mental Wellness Resources \$10K
- According to the *Health Behaviours of School-Aged Children Survey*, a significant proportion of Yukon students are feeling depressed or low at least once a week.
- The Report on the results of the 2018 *Health Behaviour of School Aged Children Survey* was released to the public in Winter 2022 by HSS.

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**Mental Health Supports for School Staff and  
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Education

- The 3rd Learning During COVID-19 survey found almost half of student respondents said the pandemic had very negatively or negatively impacted their mental health and wellness.
- There is growing recognition within Canada of the critical nature of improving the mental health of young Canadians with a particular emphasis on building positive mental health, in contrast to historically focusing on mental illness.
- The Yukon is a member of the Pan-Canadian Joint Consortium of School Health, a partnership of 25 Ministries of Health and Education across Canada working to promote a Comprehensive School Health approach to student wellness/well-being and achievement/success for all children and youth.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2/28/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Student to Student Harm in Schools****Education**

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**Value:**

- The health, safety and well-being of students and staff is our first priority.

**Recommended response:**

- There is a need to proactively and responsively address concerns of student-to-student harm.
- There is a clear expectation that all members of the school community must not engage in bullying, abusive or other unacceptable behaviors, as outlined in our Safe and Caring Schools Policy.
- Peer-to-peer harm is taken very seriously, and we commit to examining the need for a stand-alone policy to address this issue.
- If a serious incident occurs at school, we follow emergency plans and response protocols. This includes working with the RCMP and other agencies as well as providing support to families involved.
- We have developed communication guidance to support school administrators in providing clear and consistent communication to families.

**Additional response:**

- School staff promote respectful and positive behaviours by providing welcoming and positive spaces for teaching and learning.
- Few children come to school intending to be disruptive – it is up to the adults in the school to be sensitive to the signs that a student may become dysregulated and demonstrate escalated behaviours.
- Staff use Violence and Threat Risk Assessment training to recognize signs and respond appropriately.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Student to Student Harm in Schools**Education

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**Resources and Supports:**

- We are focusing on training and onboarding to:
    - support staff in building connection with students;
    - identify risks, signs of trauma, unhealthy social and bullying behaviours; and
    - respond with effective supports and redirecting behaviours.
  - We share resources with staff and students and families about restorative practices to strengthen school communities.
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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Dysregulated behavior, violence and threats occurring in schools is an issue of concern.
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**Background:**

The Department of Education promotes respectful and safe school environments in the following ways:

- Working closely with government and non-government partners to promote safe schools and response to concerns of safety;
- Safe and Caring Schools Policy;
- Student Protection Policy;
- Sexual Orientation and Gender Identity Policy;
- Non-violent Crises Intervention training; and
- Available cyberbullying resources and presentations with guest speakers.

Training and supports for staff

- The department supports school staff after incidents through: consultation with School Community Consultant; Employee and Family Assistance Program (EFAP, or short term counseling); and support and collaboration from the RCMP and other medical and other government and non-government agencies.
  - The department has a Safe and Caring Schools Support Plan that outlines the training offered to school staff to support them.
-

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Student to Student Harm in Schools****Education**

- Nonviolent Crisis Intervention training is an example of effective industry-standard training that is widely available to school-based staff to prevent and respond to students who are demonstrating escalated behaviours.
- Training in the Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol (VTRA) is offered by Department of Education every two years.
- Training for school VTRA teams was held at the end of March 2021 via virtual means from the North American Centre for Threat Assessment and Trauma Response (NATCAR).
- Through the collective agreement, we work with YAEP at the *Positive Behaviour Intervention Support and Classroom Diversity Committee* to develop these supports for Yukon schools.

Process for dealing with 'incidents of concern'

- The department has a 'Workplace Risk Assessment and Safety Plan Procedure' in place for dealing with incidents that occur which indicate that a student's actions may be a risk to staff or other students.
- Under the procedure, such incidents are first reported to the school principal, who investigates the incident using the 'Workplace Risk Assessment'.
- If it is determined that the incident involved a serious threat such as a threat to harm or kill, the 'Violence Threat Risk Assessment Protocol' is used to address the incident. This activates the involvement of community partners to deal with the issue, including the RCMP, Student Support Services, and Health and Social Services.
- If the principal determines that there is otherwise a risk of injury to staff or other students then the Workplace Risk Assessment and Safety Plan Procedure is followed and the appropriate plans and resources are put in place to support the school, staff, and students to address and deal with the issue.
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**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****03/07/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Apprenticeship Program****Spring Session 2023**  
Education

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**Value**

- Officials from the Training Programs unit work with apprentices to provide flexible supports for their success.

**Recommended response:**

- The Yukon Apprenticeship program continues to support registered Yukon apprentices to complete their program requirements in partnership with Yukon University and Alberta Apprenticeship.
- The Department of Education budgets over \$2.5 Million toward supporting apprentices.
- The Yukon apprenticeship staff are in the process of moving forward with work that began just prior to COVID-19 which involves the recommendations made by the Apprenticeship Advisory Board.
- The majority of Yukon apprentices are employed by Yukon's private sector, with 5 apprentices currently employed by Yukon government.
- I encourage anyone interested in pursuing training and careers in the trades, or employers who are interested in working with an apprentice, to contact the Training Program Unit at the Department of Education, or to visit our newly redesigned Apprenticeship website at Yukon.ca.

**Additional response – Dual Credit:**

- The Department of Education is currently updating the Dual Credit program, where high school students are able to take post-secondary courses and receive credit for them.

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Apprenticeship Program****Spring Session 2023**  
Education

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- This will help create more options for high school students to partake in pre-apprenticeship and other apprenticeship programs to advance their careers at an earlier age.
- High school students can also enroll in the Youth in Trades course if offered at their school.

**Additional response – Apprentices not eligible for Yukon Grant:**

- While apprentices are not eligible for the Yukon Grant, the Government of Yukon offers Yukon apprentices one of the most robust and comprehensive apprenticeship support programs in the country. These supports include:
  - Agreements with Yukon University and Alberta Apprenticeship where the government pays for tuition and seat fees.
  - Employment Insurance for eligible apprentices.
  - Funding supports through the Working Up program to cover those costs not eligible under Employment Insurance, which may include funding for travel, books, commuting, second residence, living allowance and daycare costs.
  - Additional Government of Canada and Yukon government loans and grants are offered through the Training Program Unit. Some are geared specifically towards women in trades or Red Seal completion; others are more inclusive of all apprentices at all stages of their journey.
  - In addition to the financial supports, Yukon apprentices have access to the Virtual Learning Strategy program for tutoring and exam preparation support if needed.

# **Session Briefing Note**

## **Apprenticeship Program**

# **Spring Session 2023**

## **Education**

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- There has been an interest in what supports are available to apprentices and adult learners and how many apprentices YG employs.
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### **Background:**

- As of January 31, 2023, there are 77 Yukon apprentices registered for training at Yukon University and another 54 registered in various institutions in Alberta for the 2022-23 academic year.
- There are five apprentices working with the Yukon government: two Heavy Equipment and Truck and Transport Technician apprentices with Highways & Public Works, two Cook apprentices, and one Baker apprentice with Health & Social Services.
- While the Yukon government employs journeypersons in various trades, it is sometimes the case that the positions available within Yukon government may not offer the scope of work required for apprentices to meet the training requirements for certification.
- As of Jan 31, 2023, Yukon has 482 registered apprentices, including 125 First Nations and 54 female apprentices.
- 50 journeyperson certificates were issued in the 2022 calendar year.

### Dual credit high school program

- Yukon students in grades 11 and 12 are eligible to receive credits through the dual credit program.
- The dual credit program allows students to enroll in a university course that leads to a Post- Secondary credential and receive credits for both high school and university.
- Students in the Yukon can enroll in the Youth in Trades course if offered at their school.

## Session Briefing Note

### Apprenticeship Program

## Spring Session 2023

### Education

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#### Apprenticeship exams

- As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, Alberta Apprenticeship and Industry Training ceased requiring Alberta apprentices to write their Level Exams to pass their apprenticeship levels. Apprentices only need to pass their technical training course work. Alberta is currently assessing whether to reinstate these Level Exams. Other jurisdictions in Canada have reinstated their Level Exams post COVID-19. The Yukon continues to require all Yukon apprentices to write their Level Exams regardless of where they attend school.
- The Department of Education helps to mitigate this concern by ensuring supports are available for those apprentices that request them (tutor supports and exam preparation).

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**4/4/2023**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Student Financial Assistance - Non-Traditional  
Programs**

Education

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**Value:**

- The Government of Yukon's student financial assistance programs are supporting many students to attend post-secondary education institutions in the Yukon and beyond.

**Recommended response:**

- The Student Financial Assistance Act and regulations outline the criteria for Yukon Grant, which is available for students attending eligible full-time post-secondary programs.
- There are certain programs offered at Yukon University that do not meet the criteria for the Yukon Grant or Student Training Allowance.
- Department officials continue to work with Yukon University to ensure students are aware of other funding sources that may be available to them for non-traditional programs.

**Additional response:**

- If a student or adult learner does not qualify for the Yukon Grant, Student Training Allowance, or Canada Student Loans and Grants, they may be eligible for funding support through the Working Up program.
- If students have questions about the supports they may be eligible for, I encourage them to contact our Training Programs staff who would be happy to assist them.



# Session Briefing Note

**Spring Session 2023**

## Student Financial Assistance - Non-Traditional Programs

Education

### Context—this may be an issue because:

- Questions have been raised in the Legislature because certain Yukon University programs are not eligible for the Yukon Grant since they are not ‘full-time’ within the context of the *Student Financial Assistance Act*.

### Background:

- The criteria for post-secondary student eligibility for financial assistance is established in legislation. The Yukon Grant is set out in the *Student Financial Assistance Act* and regulations, and the Student Training Allowance is set out in the *Occupational Training Act* and regulations.
- To be eligible for the Student Training Allowance, a student must attend a program at Yukon University that is three or more consecutive weeks in duration;
- To be eligible for the Yukon Grant, a student’s program of study must be at least 12 weeks in duration within a timeframe of 15 weeks, and each study period must be no less than six consecutive weeks and no more than 52 consecutive weeks. In cases where a student is enrolled in a program with courses that are less than six weeks in duration, a student may still be eligible for the Yukon Grant if those courses make up an essential element in a program of study which is at least 12 weeks long and takes place within a time frame of 15 consecutive weeks.
- Registered Yukon apprentices receive financial support through the Working Up program for the duration of the 8-10 week technical training portion for each level of their apprenticeship. These supports include: payment of tuition costs and seat fees; funding for travel, commuting, second residence, and daycare costs.

**Approved by:**

Mary Cameron

02/02/2023

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note**  
**Yukon Excellence Awards****Spring Session 2023**  
Education

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**Value:**

- We are committed to encouraging academic achievement in grades 10 to 12, and helping students pursue post-secondary education or training.

**Recommended response:**

- We are working with our partners to modernize the Yukon Excellence Awards.
- This work will align the awards with the Yukon's redesigned school curriculum; better recognize students' skill development, achievement and improvement; and reflect reconciliation with Yukon First Nations.

**Additional response:**

- The eligibility criteria for the Yukon Excellence Awards needs to be modernized, as the current criteria are becoming obsolete.
- The awards are intended to support students attending Yukon schools and learning about the Yukon and its unique social, cultural and economic context.
- Yukon resident students who choose to attend secondary school outside of the Yukon remain ineligible for these awards.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- This collaboration and the implementation of changes has been temporarily delayed because of the COVID-19 pandemic.

## Session Briefing Note

### Yukon Excellence Awards

## Spring Session 2023

Education

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#### Background:

- The eligibility criteria for the Yukon Excellence Awards Program have changed a number of times over its history to reflect changing graduation requirements.
- We are working with the Advisory Committee for Yukon Education to propose changes to the Yukon Excellence Awards to recognize both the top academic achievers among students, and to allow for school-based awards for achievement or improvement in a student's chosen area of interest or strength.
- Since the mid-1990s, Education has been accruing the number of awards earned by students. The department holds the awards for ten years after a student's date of graduation.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

02/02/2023

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Deputy Minister, Department of Education

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Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Yukon Grant**Education

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**Privacy Breach: refer to TAB DPT05****Other Adult Learner Supports: refer to TAB AE01****Value:**

- We're supporting eligible students with funding opportunities to pursue post-secondary education.

**Recommended response:**

- The Government of Yukon supports eligible Yukon students through a variety of funding options, such as the Yukon Grant and Canada Student Financial Assistance Loans and Grants.
- Every student's situation is different and eligibility for funding and amounts are determined by their specific situation.
- Student Financial Assistance Officers work with each student to ensure all the information needed for the application is received for assessment.
- We know that there are some students who have yet to receive their January 2023 Yukon Grant payment. The department is working with students to send in the required Program Information Form, which verifies their full-time enrollment in post-secondary studies. This form allows the department to release the student's second Yukon Grant payment. Student Financial Assistance Officers have reached out to students who have not yet sent in the appropriate information.

**Additional response:**

- If a student is eligible to apply or receives funding for post-secondary school from another jurisdiction or country, they are not eligible for funding in Yukon.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Yukon Grant****Education**

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- If a student is not approved for the Yukon Grant or Canada Student Financial Assistance Loans or Grants they have the right to appeal.
  - The Student Financial Assistance Committee meets each month to hear appeals as needed.
  - Eligibility requirements and how to apply are available on Yukon.ca.
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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

On Aug 24, 2022, a privacy breach occurred at the Department of Education involving the personal information of 537 individuals that had applied for the Yukon Grant.

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**Background:**

- As of January 17, 2023, the department has received 1150 applications for one or more of the student funding streams for the 2022-23 academic year. This is comparable to the same time last year.

**Financial Supports for Yukon Grant**

- Students can receive up to 170 weeks of funding over their lifetime if they meet the eligibility requirements at the time of application.
  - Yukon Grant is calculated on a weekly basis of \$154/week and paid out in a lump-sum payment
    - For a full academic school year – September to April (34 weeks) a student will receive approximately \$5,236 (in 2 payments).
    - If attending school outside of the territory, a student may be eligible for travel amount of \$1,500. (Students from Yukon communities may also be eligible for an extra travel amount.)
  - As a response to the pandemic, a direct deposit system was implemented.
  - Students applying for the Yukon Grant (in person or by distance) are now required to provide confirmation of full-time, post-secondary enrolment just prior to each funding disbursement.
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**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Yukon Grant**

Education

Approved by:

Mary Cameron

3/29/2023

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Adult Learners - Supports****Education**

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**Value:**

- We continue to help adult learners and post-secondary students access financial support and summer employment opportunities.

**Recommended response:**

- On April 1, 2022, the Labour Market unit transferred to the Department of Economic Development. Individual supports for adult learning remain with the Department of Education.
- We are providing individual adult learners with flexible supports that best meet their needs.
- We recognize that every individual's journey and needs are different and encourage any Yukoner to come in and talk to the Training Programs team to discuss the support available to them.
- We encourage students to apply well ahead of the time they are heading to school in order to ensure their funding will be in place on time. For example, we recommend students apply in July if they are planning on heading to school in September.
- We know that there are some students who have yet to receive their January 2023 Yukon Grant payment. The department is working with students to send in the required Program Information Form, which verifies their full-time enrollment in post-secondary studies. This form allows the department to release the student's second Yukon Grant payment. Student Financial Assistance Officers have reached out to students who have not yet sent in the appropriate information.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Adult Learners - Supports**Education

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**Additional response:**

- The following programs are available at the Department of Education to support adult learners:
  - Student Financial Assistance, which includes the Canada Student Financial Assistance program, Yukon Grant and Student Training Allowance. 973 students have applied for support from one or more of these programs between April 1, 2022 and February 17, 2023.
  - Yukon Apprenticeship (482 registered apprentices as of January 31, 2023).
  - In addition to financial supports, Yukon apprentices have access to the Virtual Learning Strategy program for tutoring and exam preparation support.
  - Working Up, which provides broad support for individuals to advance towards their career goals. 209 individuals have been supported between April 1, 2022 and February 17, 2023.
  - Summer Career Placement / Student Training Employment Program where we create work experience opportunities for students (124 positions were created in summer 2022 through both programs).
- We will continue to work with adult students, Yukon First Nations, Economic Development and other partners to adapt and develop initiatives to support the needs of Yukon post-secondary students and adult learners.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Processing times took longer than normal this year due to high volumes and late applications.



**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Adult Learners - Supports****Education**

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**Background:**Training Programs funding supports for adult learners

- Yukon Grant:
  - Funding available for eligible Yukon students enrolled in full time post-secondary studies.
- Student Training Allowance:
  - Funding available to eligible Yukon students attending Yukon University or Alkan Air as a full-time student in a program that is at least three weeks long.
- Canada Student Financial Assistance Program Loans and Grants:
  - Yukon residents can apply for the Canada Student Financial Assistance Program Loans and Grants for both full-time and part-time post-secondary studies.
  - As this is a national program, funding for approved Yukon students is paid directly through the National Student Loans Service Centre.
- Apprenticeship:
  - The Apprenticeship Unit in Training Programs provides administrative and operational supports for Yukon apprentices and their employers. This includes guidance, advice and support to register in the program, in-person technical training at Yukon University and at various trade institutions in Alberta.
  - In addition to many financial supports, Yukon apprentices have access to the Virtual Learning Strategy program for tutoring and exam preparation support.
- Working Up:
  - This funding supports individuals seeking upgrading, formal vocational training (including apprenticeship), foundational and essential skills, professional assessments, accommodations for persons with disabilities and may cover training costs for programs that are not covered by the other programs.
  - Financial supports include payment of tuition costs and seat fees, funding for travel, commuting, second residence, and daycare costs.
  - Registered Yukon apprentices can receive financial support through the Working Up program for the duration of the 8-10 week technical training portion of each level of their apprenticeship.

Labour Market transfer to Economic Development

- On April 1, 2022, the labour market component of the Post-Secondary Labour Market Unit moved from Education to Economic Development.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****Adult Learners - Supports****Education**

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- Seven FTEs moved from Education to Economic Development, including one Director, five Labour Market Development Officers and one Admin Staff.
- Education retained the administration of Apprenticeship, training and student financial assistance and \$3,876,044 of O&M in 2022-23 to deliver the programs.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****3/29/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **CASA- Careers in Health and Social Services Education**

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#### **CASA Agreement – IEP Reinstatement: refer to TAB SI02**

##### **Value:**

- The Yukon government continues to support Yukon University to assist Yukoners to pursue careers in health and social services.

##### **Recommended response:**

- The Department of Education has provided the University with \$170,000 to support the commitment in the first Confidence and Supply Agreement (April 28, 2021 to January 31, 2023).
- In addition, the Practical Nurse Program now provides annual opportunities for up to 18 new students to pursue healthcare careers.
- The graduates of this program provide much needed talent to fill vacancies in this important healthcare role in the Yukon.

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##### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Inaccurate information was circulating that funding from Education had been cut for the Practical Nurse program (it had not).
- The first CASA contained a commitment to support members of Yukon communities to pursue careers in health and social services program delivery in partnership with Yukon First Nations, Yukon University and the Government of Canada.

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##### **Background:**

- The Practical Nurse program at Yukon University is a two-year program with annual intakes of anywhere from six to 18 students. This results in two active cohorts in any academic year.
- Education is contributing \$740,780 in 2022-23 to support this program.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****CASA- Careers in Health and Social Services** Education

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- Education is working with Health and Social Services and Yukon University to further advance partnerships and planning to support careers in health and social services in Yukon communities.
- Under the first CASA agreement the Department of Education earmarked \$255,000 to support members of Yukon communities to pursue careers in Health and Social Services:
  - Education provided \$170,000 in planning dollars for this initiative to the University in 2022-2023 fiscal.
  - The remaining \$85,000 supported a proposal between Yukon Hospital Corporation and the First Nations Youth Internships program to promote health careers and engage 32 participants over 3 years to be mentored while working in areas of medical and acute care environments. Education and Economic Development are working together to support this program.
  - We continue to work with Yukon University, Economic Development, and Health and Social Services on this initiative.
- Graduates of the program receive a Practical Nurse diploma, and typically successfully find employment in their field in the Yukon.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****2/28/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****SOVA – School of Visual Arts**Education

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**Value:**

- We are committed to supporting and fostering vibrant arts and culture in the Yukon.

**Recommended response:**

- The Department of Education has supported the School of Visual Arts (SOVA) since its inception in 2007.
- SOVA provides developing artists with industry transferable skills and the foundational arts requirement for academic arts programs in partner universities.
- Education committed to providing \$634,794 in 2023-24 to support SOVA. Funding is provided through the existing transfer payment agreement with Yukon University as a Strategic Initiative.
- Strategic Initiative funding requests are developed through Department of Education and Yukon University officials.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- SOVA's governance council is exploring the creation of an Indigenous Fine Arts program. Yukon University keeps us updated on the program's developments.

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**Background:**

- The SOVA governance council includes representatives from Tr'ondëk Hwëch'in, Yukon University and the Klondike Institute of Arts and Culture.
- In 2019-20, the department worked with Yukon University to create a core funding agreement. Funding for SOVA moved from Core Operations to Strategic Initiatives, enabling the department to engage directly with the SOVA governance council members regarding the Indigenous Fine Arts program development.

**Session Briefing Note****Spring Session 2023****SOVA – School of Visual Arts****Education**

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- An increase of \$130,000 for 2023-24 was requested and approved to reinstate personnel in the SOVA Library (\$60K), and to ensure on-going access to funds for maintenance of equipment and technology as well as requisite expendables.
- On October 1, 2021 one-time bridge funding was requested and approved for \$36,794 for fiscal 2021-22.
- Included in a request made on October 1, 2021, was an additional funding request of \$213,069.49 over four years to support a First Nations Community Liaison and Indigenous Arts Program Dialogue.
- Future funding requests need to come through the Yukon University's Joint Agreement Management Committee.
- JAM meets on a monthly basis and includes the following representatives:
  - Yukon University: Vice President of University Services, Director of Finance & Administrative Services, Manager of Budgets
  - For YG: Director, Finance; Director, Labour Market; Labour Market Development Officer, Director of Training Programs
  - The parties may designate advisors to attend meetings.

**Approved by:****Mary Cameron****02/28/2023**\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, Department of Education\_\_\_\_\_  
Date approved

**Yukon University Varsity Sports Feasibility: refer to TAB AE05**

**Value:**

- The Government of Yukon is proud of its collaboration with Yukon College to establish Yukon University as Canada's first university north of 60.

**Recommended response:**

- As a hybrid university, Yukon University offers degrees, diplomas, certificates, career and trades training, second language support, and upgrading to meet the diverse learning needs of Yukon communities.
- In the 2023-24 budget the Government of Yukon continues to allocate \$1.5 million in core O&M funding to support transition.
- We continue to support Yukon University in advancing its strategic initiatives through the Joint Agreement Management committee made up of members of the University, the Department of Education and the Department of Economic Development.
- We look forward to continuing to collaborate with Yukon University to help it achieve the commitments outlined in its strategic plan.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The *Yukon University Act* came into force on February 6, 2020, and the university continues to transition from a college.
- Yukon University released its five-year strategic plan on April 4, 2022.

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**Background:**

President/Vice Chancellor

- On August 16, 2021, Dr. Lesley Brown started her position as the newly appointed president and vice-chancellor of Yukon University.

# Session Briefing Note

## Yukon University - Transition

# TAB AE04

## Spring Session 2023

### Education

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### Board of Governors

- The university board of governors has 17 members and is chaired by David Morrison.
  - 10 members are appointed by the Commissioner in Executive Council. Appointments include members with extensive leadership experience:
    - Jamena (James Allen) a former Dän Nättthe (Chief) of the Champagne and Aishihik First Nations.
    - Aan Goosh oo Mark Wedge (former Khà Shâde Hénì (Chief) of the Carcross/Tagish First Nation.
    - Chris Mahar (former ADM of Finance, Yukon Government); and
  - Seven members are established through virtue of office and university elections process. Appointments include Jason Bilsky, CEO Yukon Hospital Corporation.

### Funding

- Yukon University O&M and Transition activities are funded through Transfer Payment Agreement with the Department of Education.
- Transition funding for Yukon University of \$1.5 million in O&M began in April 2019 and is maintained in the department's 2023-24 budget.
  - \$1.0M in capital has been allocated to further support University Transition since April 1, 2020 (\$100,000 in 2022-23; \$500,000 in 2021-22; \$400,000 in 2020-21).
- Yukon University has two distinct O&M funding streams: core funding and strategic initiatives funding.
- Core funding increases for 2023-24 include:
  - Increase for a new five-year Academic plan: \$250k.
  - Increase of \$130k for SOVA to reinstate personnel, maintenance of equipment & technology as well as requisite expendables.
- Strategic initiatives are identified by both the University and the Department of Education and are based on priorities.
- Strategic funding for 2023-24 includes:
  - Ongoing funding Centre for Northern Innovation in Mining \$1.2M.
  - Ongoing funding for Licensed Practical Nurse Program \$741k.
  - The funding for the Professional Diploma Pathways program in 2023/2024 will be a total of \$503,029.
  - Additionally, ELCC is funding the Early Learning Program to offer early learning courses in rural communities for a total commitment of \$145k.



# **Session Briefing Note**

## **Yukon University - Transition**

# **TAB AE04**

## **Spring Session 2023**

### **Education**

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- The priorities are discussed at a Joint Agreement Management Team (JAM) and agreed upon by both parties.
- The JAM Team works together to provide oversight and accountability around the strategic initiative funding provided through this agreement.
- Members of the JAM Team for the university include the VP of University Services, VP of Finance and Administration, Director of Finance, and Manager of Budgets. For the Department of Education includes the Director of Finance and Director of Training Programs. For the Department of Economic Development includes Director Labour Market Development and Labour Market Development Officer, Labour Market Development.

### Science building

- In March 2019, the Government of Canada announced \$26 million over the next five years for Yukon University, for a new science building on the Whitehorse campus. A preliminary functional plan has been developed by the government and university.
- Highways and Public Works is preparing to sign a project collaboration agreement with the university that will ensure the department continues to provide technical assistance to the university for the management of the project.

### Degree programs

- The first graduating class of Yukon University included graduates from the first made-in-Yukon degree: the Bachelor of Arts in Indigenous Governance Degree.
- Yukon University also now offers a 4-year Bachelor of Business Administration, and a 1-year post-graduate certificate in Climate Change Policy.

### Accountability framework

- The Yukon University Act provides that the Minister of Education must establish accountability and performance measures for Yukon University, in consultation with each Yukon First Nation and the University.
- The department is coordinating the development of the Yukon University accountability framework.
- As agreed to by Education and the university, Yukon University has produced a preliminary draft of the accountability framework, which Education will use to inform consultation with Yukon First Nations.
- Results of consultation with both parties will inform the first accountability framework for the new university.

### Campus land and buildings

- The Yukon University Act provides that the government may transfer the ownership of campus lands and buildings (property) to Yukon University.

# Session Briefing Note

## Yukon University - Transition

# TAB AE04

## Spring Session 2023

### Education

- A joint working group has been established to consider the issues and options for transferring land and building ownership to Yukon University, recognizing that this is a longer-term project.

### Yukon University Strategic Plan – Becoming, 2022-27

- On April 4, 2022 the university released its first strategic plan since transitioning from a college.
- Vision: Yukon University will become a thriving learning and research community leading Canada's North.
- Mission: We provide inclusive, quality education experiences that equip learners to seize opportunities, make change and positively impact local and global communities.
- Commitments: Over the life of this plan, Yukon University will:
  - Build our identity and nurture our culture as a university
  - Take our place in advancing reconciliation
  - Continue to develop our northern expertise
  - Develop bold thinkers and confident change leaders Be leaders for the common good

### Varsity sports feasibility study

- The Departments of Education and Economic Development worked with Yukon University to complete a feasibility study of a varsity sports program at the university.
- This is a government mandate letter commitment.
- The study examined factors such as benefits, staffing requirements and O&M costs, process to scale up a program, and opportunities for Yukon First Nations participation or partnership.

### Communications about communicable diseases

- Yukon University is autonomous in its governance. The university establishes its own policies and procedures for programming and operations.
- The Department of Education and Yukon University communicate regularly on matters of public policy.

#### Approved by:

Mary Cameron

03/08/2023

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

### **Yukon University Varsity Sports Feasibility**      Education

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#### **Value:**

- The Government of Yukon is proud of its collaboration with Yukon College to establish Yukon University as Canada's first university north of 60.

#### **Recommended response:**

- We look forward to continuing to work with Yukon University as it continues to grow.
- This includes reviewing the results of the feasibility study to assess the viability of a varsity sports program at Yukon University.
- The Yukon University Varsity Sport Feasibility Study has been provided by consultants and received by the Steering Committee.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Questions are expected about the status of the feasibility study, a mandate commitment.

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#### **Background:**

##### Feasibility study background

- The varsity sport feasibility study is a government mandate letter commitment.
- The Departments of Education and Economic Development worked with Yukon University to complete the study.
- A steering committee for the study was struck in late December 2021 and included representatives from the university, Yukon Aboriginal Sport Circle, Sport Yukon, Education, and Economic Development.
- A contractor with related expertise conducted the study, which examined factors such as benefits, staffing requirements, O&M costs, a process to scale up a program, and opportunities for Yukon First Nations participation or partnership.

**Session Briefing Note**

**Spring Session 2023**

**Yukon University Varsity Sports Feasibility**

Education

- The contractor delivered a final report to the Steering Committee in November 2022.
- The organizations are currently reviewing the report and assessing next steps.

**Approved by:**

**Mary Cameron**

**2/28/2023**

Deputy Minister, Department of Education

Date approved

**Session Briefing Note****Housing Issues**Yukon Housing Corporation

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**Recommended response:**

- As we are aware, homelessness has far-reaching consequences that impact Yukoners. The substance use health emergency and the COVID-19 pandemic have only intensified these issues.
- Meanwhile, rental options are too few and often too expensive. Vacancy rates in the rental market have dropped to 0.8% - the lowest in years –a reality that influences the Yukon Housing growing waitlist.
- Down payment costs remain out of reach for many Yukoners, and homeownership may be less affordable as interest rates rise.
- Across government, we are working with stakeholders to develop new land parcels, increase housing stock, and rapidly increase housing supply while also responding to the findings of the 2022 Office of the Auditor General Report on Housing.

**Additional response:**

- We continue to enhance our Community Housing stock to support a full housing continuum - 47 new affordable units at 401 Jeckell, 10 units of affordable and supportive housing for seniors through Normandy Living and three new triplexes in Watson Lake, Mayo and Whitehorse demonstrate how we are responding to the 2022 Office of the Auditor General of Canada recommendations on housing.
- Partnership with Da Daghay Development Corporation for the construction of 98 new units is one of numerous housing examples that further support vulnerable Yukoners.
- Through our new approach to housing YG employees in communities, we aim to decrease the housing cost disparities in communities, further incentivize private sector investment in housing, and prioritize

## Session Briefing Note

### Housing Issues

### Yukon Housing Corporation

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allocations of the government's existing staff housing units to meet critical needs for community well-being.

- Finally, as part of the response to the 2022 Office of the Auditor General of Canada recommendations on housing, we have expanded capital incentive programs to include land development for residential housing, while also enhancing our Community Housing stock.
- 

#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Since COVID-19, Yukoners have faced additional housing challenges including increased housing prices and low vacancy rates.
  - The recently declared substance use health emergency in the Yukon and closure of Chilkoot Trail Inn have added strain on the housing crisis.
- 

#### **Background:**

##### Recent interest rate hikes

- The Bank of Canada raised interest rates for an eighth time in January, bringing the Bank rate to 4.50%. At the start of 2022, that rate was 0.25 %. Rising debt costs will make it more challenging for homeowners to qualify for a mortgage and will increase monthly debt costs for existing homeowners and developers.

##### Housing Action Plan and Safe at Home Plan

- The 10-year Housing Action Plan (HAP) for Yukon was launched in 2015 and provides guidance on housing priorities for the territory.
    - A Housing Action Plan Implementation Committee (HAP – IC) made up of key housing stakeholders and partners from across the territory oversees its implementation.
  - The Safe at Home community-based Action Plan to End and Prevent Homelessness (Safe at Home) was launched in November 2017.
  - The Safe at Home plan was developed by the Government of Yukon, the City of Whitehorse, Kwanlin Dün First Nation, the Ta'an Kwäch'än Council and a number of local NGOs.
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## Session Briefing Note

### Housing Issues

### Yukon Housing Corporation

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- The Safe at Home Society was awarded \$10 million under the Northern Carve-Out of the National Housing Co-Investment Fund, \$5 million in funding under the federal Rapid Housing Initiative 2.0, and \$1.02 million in funding from YHC's Housing Initiatives Fund - for a supportive housing project proposal.

#### Land Development

- The Government of Yukon continues to support new land development to increase the supply of land available for housing development. This includes:
  - Government-led land initiatives in Whistle bend, as well initiatives to sell the 5<sup>th</sup> and Rogers site (See TAB #34) and old Macaulay Lodge site (See TAB #37);
  - First Nations land development projects – KDFN's Copper Ridge West (See TAB #35) and Range Point projects;
  - Private Sector land development project initiatives – the Tank Farm (See TAB #40).
- Community Services estimates an additional 1,476 new housing lots will come online by 2026, enough to accommodate 2,713 additional housing units.

#### New Housing Construction and partnerships with the Private Sector

- Yukon Housing Corporation offers several loans and grants programs (See TAB #4) to incentivize new housing construction – namely, the *Housing Initiative Fund* (See TAB #63), the *Developer Build Loan* (See TAB #59), and the *Municipal Matching Rental Construction Program* (MMRCP).
- These territorial-based programs complement new housing construction incentive programs under the National Housing Strategy, including the *National Housing Co-investment Fund* and the *Rapid Housing Initiative*.
- Finally, we provide subsidies to households living in private market housing through the *Canada Yukon Housing Benefit* (See TAB #57) and the *Rent Supplement* program.

#### Community Housing and the Most Vulnerable

- Yukon Housing Corporation and its partners continue to implement the new Community Housing Program, which aims to improve better client outcomes and fiscal resiliency (See TAB #58)
- Currently, YHC offers over 700 units through the Community Housing program in which eligible Yukoners pay 25% of their income for rent (rent-geared-to-income), we provide

## Session Briefing Note

### Housing Issues

### Yukon Housing Corporation

support to more than 80 households through our rent supplement program and more than 130 Yukoners through the Canada-Yukon Housing Benefit.

- Starting in early 2023, YHC is introducing a mixed-income and mixed-use tenant's allocation policy to its Whitehorse buildings while providing tenants with appropriate partner supports to help them maintain housing.
- Work continues with the Safe at Home Society with the intent of allocating a percentage of units to individuals on the By-Name List.
- YHC is working to implement the Aging in Place Action Plan, which includes broadening programming to include Senior Supportive Housing Program as an option for seniors who require additional supports.
- Finally, YHC and housing providers have recently completed or are currently making significant capital investments to expand the community housing stock, including:
  - The 401 Jeckell – 47-unit building (See TAB #19);
  - Three new triplexes in Mayo, Watson and Whitehorse (See TAB #21);
  - A new Housing First building in Watson Lake (See TAB #25);
  - A new 10-plex in Old Crow (See TAB #23);
  - Duplexes in Carmacks, Dawson, Faro and Mayo (See TAB #20); and
  - New emergency shelters in Dawson and Whitehorse (See TAB #42).

#### Major investments in housing include:

- The Canada Yukon Housing Benefit, an eight-year rent subsidy program to support low to moderate income Yukoners renting private market rental housing (See TAB #57).
- \$3.5M for Normandy Living, a private senior's residence with supports (See TAB #38)
- \$21.7M for the design and construction of the 4<sup>th</sup> and Jeckell, a 47-unit mixed-income housing development in Whitehorse (See TAB #19).
- \$2.4M over 2021-2022 for the construction of three triplexes in Mayo, Watson Lake, and Whitehorse in addition to \$3M in federal funding under the Rapid Housing Initiative - contributing nine units of housing options. (See TAB #21)
- \$400K in 2021-2022 for the design of the Watson Lake Housing First project which will be tendered in the Fall 2023 (See TAB #25).
- Design work to support the housing needs in the communities of Teslin, Carcross and Dawson in 2022-2023.
- \$5.7M annually under the Housing Initiatives Fund (See TAB #63).
- \$2.4M to Yukon through a Northern Housing Fund under the National Housing Strategy.



## Session Briefing Note

### Housing Issues

### Yukon Housing Corporation

- \$6.9M for First Nation Energy Efficiency Program and \$8.4M for Community Housing retrofits under the Low Carbon Economy Fund (LCEF) provided on a 75% (Canada) - 25% (territory) cost-matching ratio between 2019 and 2024. (See TAB #60 & #61)
- \$4.1M for the construction of a Housing First residence for vulnerable individuals (5<sup>th</sup> and Wood St.) in Whitehorse
- Continued commitment by Government of Yukon toward the Municipal Matching Rental Construction program for new rental units.

#### Affordable rental housing incentives (in partnership with the private market):

- Since its inception in 2019, the Housing Initiatives Fund (HIF) intakes have brought on line 361 units and 159 are under construction. (See Tab #63).
  - The sixth intake of the Housing Initiative Fund was launched in November 2022. The deadline to submit an application February 3, 2023.
- The Municipal Matching Rental Construction Grant has supported the construction of over 126 new rental homes throughout the Yukon, ten of which are in progress.
- Since 2020, our homeownership loan program that focuses on providing financial support for the purchase and construction of building projects in rural Yukon, has helped 21 Yukoners to buy or build their first homes. 14 of these projects are completed.

#### Approved by:



Justin Ferbey  
President, Yukon Housing Corporation

January 31, 2023

Date approved

## Session Briefing Note

### Our Clean Future Annual Report

Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

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#### Recommended response:

- We continue to make significant progress in the implementation of *Our Clean Future*.
- In September 2022, we released our second annual report. It outlines the progress we made in taking action on climate change in 2021.
  - Notably, in 2021, the Yukon Climate Risk Assessment was released and we saw a 12% decrease in our emissions when compared to 2020.
- Through this report we introduced five new actions and revised 13 existing actions to better meet our goals.
- *Our Clean Future* is an adaptive strategy, which means that we assess and adjust the actions we are taking year-over-year to stay on track to meet our long-term goals.
- We will continue to track and report our progress annually.

#### Additional response:

- Over the past year, we have advanced several key actions, such as:
  - Legislated greenhouse gas emissions reduction targets and associated reporting through the *Clean Energy Act*;
  - Received and analyzed the recommendations from the Yukon Climate Leadership Council ([Ref ENV #24 / EMR #34](#));
  - Established a standard method for determining the health of wetland ecosystems, and tracking baseline conditions to understand future changes;
  - Established a geohazard mapping program to understand risks to the Yukon's transportation corridors; and,
  - Enacted the single-use paper bag ban on January 1, 2023.

## Session Briefing Note

## Our Clean Future Annual Report

Environment  
Energy, Mines and Resources

## Third response:

- Although we have made progress on many of our commitments, there is still significant work required to meet our 45 per cent greenhouse gas emissions target reduction by 2030.
- We will continue to build on *Our Clean Future* as we learn more about climate change and introduce more actions. This will be reflected in future annual reports.
- We will also continue to work with experts, stakeholders and partner governments across the territory and beyond, to identify opportunities for new actions and to accelerate and intensify existing actions to reach our ambitious target.

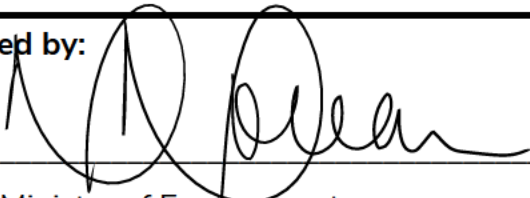
## Context — this may be an issue because:

- Climate change is of high interest to Yukoners; they will want to know the government's progress in delivering on *Our Clean Future* commitments.

## Background:

- *Our Clean Future* was released in September 2020 and is a 10-year strategy.
- *Our Clean Future* contains 136 actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions by 2030 and supports the Yukon to be highly resilient to the impacts of climate change.


Approved by:



Deputy Minister of Environment

2023-02-01

Date approved



Deputy Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources

Feb. 1, 2023

Date approved

## **Joint Corporate Note Inflation and affordability**

Finance  
Executive Council Office

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### **Recommended:**

- All Yukon households are seeing their budgets stretched by elevated levels of inflation, with lower-income households often feeling the effects more than others.
- The government continues to assess how inflation is impacting Yukoners and several measures included in the 2023-24 Budget will help make life more affordable for Yukoners.
- In 2023–24, the government is extending the Inflation Relief Rebate Program, which provides a \$50 per month rebate on ATCO Electric and Yukon Energy utility bills for the April and May billing periods, along with an additional three months later in the year.
- Other measures in the 2023-24 Budget to help make life more affordable to Yukoners include funding for food in Yukon schools, the timber harvesting incentive to boost fuelwood supply, a quarterly top-up of \$150 to eligible recipients of the Yukon Senior Income Supplement, and a \$100 monthly increase to eligible Social Assistance recipients.

### **Additional response:**

- This government already established a strong record of making life more affordable for Yukoners with almost \$10 million-worth of inflation relief made available in last year's budget.

## **Joint Corporate Note Inflation and affordability**

Finance  
Executive Council Office

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- This included more funding for Food Network Yukon, a 10 per cent top up to the Pioneer Utility Grant and rebates on the purchase of firewood.
- Yukoners are also receiving inflation relief from the federal government. This includes the accelerated Canada Workers' Benefit, the elimination of interest on student loans, a doubling of the GST tax credit, dental care and the Canada Housing Benefit for renters.

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### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- Inflation has increased to decade highs in many countries, including Canada, which is experiencing the highest inflation in almost 40 years.
- Energy prices have been a significant driver and these prices are more obvious to consumers.
- Housing affordability has been a concern in the Yukon for several years.
- [March's rate of inflation in Yukon was the highest in Canada at 5.5 per cent vs 4.3 per cent nationally according to the Whitehorse Consumer Price Index.](#)

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### **Background:**

#### Key government initiatives addressing affordability in Yukon

#### **Highlight of affordability spending in Budget 2023-24**

- \$5.3 million to extend the Inflation Relief Rebate. Yukoners will receive a \$50 credit on their power bill in April and May and for an additional three months later in the year.

## **Joint Corporate Note Inflation and affordability**

Finance  
Executive Council Office

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- \$300,000 for the Timber Harvesting Incentive program.
- \$1.5 million to increase monthly social assistance payments by \$100.
- Over \$800,000 to recipients of the Yukon Seniors Income Supplement.
- \$500,000 for food in schools.

**This builds on previous programs to protect the affordability of Yukoners including**

- Last year, the Government of Yukon announced almost \$10 million in new inflation relief measures targeted at vulnerable groups.
- The inflation relief rebate covered seven months at a total cost to Government of \$7.6 million. The inflation relief rebate automatically applied a \$50 credit to all residential and commercial ATCO Electric Yukon and Yukon Energy electricity bills.
- Yukoners on social assistance received a one-time payment of \$150.
- Seniors were supported by a 10 per cent top up in the Pioneer Utility grant and a one-time payment of \$150 to recipients of the Yukon Seniors Income Supplement.
- Yukoners who heat their homes with wood are eligible for a \$50 rebate per cord of fuel wood, this program is retroactive to April 1, 2022. Yukon also introduced the Timber Harvesting Incentive that gives commercial timber harvesters \$10 per cubic metre.
- The pilot program giving an extra \$500 per month to Extended Family Caregiver agreement caregivers and foster caregivers was extended to the end of the fiscal year.
- In June 2022, the Yukon government extended the Tourism Accommodation Sector Supplement and Tourism Non-Accommodation Sector Supplement programs, administered through Economic Development.

**Yukoners are also supported by Federal Government affordability programs**

## Joint Corporate Note Inflation and affordability

Finance  
Executive Council Office

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- Accelerated Canada Workers Benefit payments and new minimum entitlement starting in July 2023 (\$4 billion over six years, starting in 2022-23).
- Making all Canada Student Loans and Canada Apprentice Loans permanently interest-free, starting in April 2023 (\$2.7 billion over five years and \$556.3 million ongoing).
- **GST Tax Credit:** The GST tax credit will be doubled for six months in current benefit year. Additional payment will be provided in one lump-sum, before the end of the benefit year. Targeted to individuals and families with low incomes (below \$39,826, and gradually phased out above that level). Single Canadians without children would receive up to an extra \$234 and couples with two children would receive up to an extra \$467 this year. Seniors would receive an extra \$225 on average.

### Inflation outlook

- The inflation rate in Whitehorse was 5.5 per cent in March, down from 7.0 in February, but 1.2 percentage points higher than the national inflation rate of 4.3 per cent. Whitehorse's inflation rate was the highest in Canada for fourth consecutive month.
- This ranking is a reversal from earlier in 2022 when Whitehorse had the lowest inflation in Canada. For 2022 as a whole, the relatively lower inflation at the beginning of the year and higher inflation at the end of the year cancelled out, and so, the annual inflation rate in Whitehorse was the same as the national rate: 6.8 per cent.
- It is natural that relatively lower inflation in Whitehorse is eventually followed by relatively higher inflation as prices in Whitehorse follow the national trend over the long term.

## **Joint Corporate Note Inflation and affordability**

Finance  
Executive Council Office

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- The Bank of Canada has started to take a more aggressive approach to battling inflation by raising interest rates 4.25 percentage points since March 2022. The Bank's increase of 0.25 percentage point on January 25 brought the overnight rate to 4.5 per cent, the highest rate since early 2008. [This rate was maintained at the April rate announcement.](#)
- The housing market in the Yukon has stayed resilient the face of higher interest rates that have cooled markets in most other parts of Canada. Yukon was the only Canadian jurisdiction that saw residential sales in 2022 increase over 2021
- It wasn't until the fourth quarter until signs of cooling showed in the Yukon data, with average sales prices falling across all housing type. Compared with the end of 2021, prices were down by 1.2 per cent for single-detached, 3.9 per cent for duplexes, 11.4 per cent for condos, and 1.6 per cent for mobile homes.
- Most forecasters expect inflation in Canada will move towards historic norms over the next couple of years as supply chain problems subside and the effect of higher interest rates move through the economy. Canadian inflation is expected to decline from near 7 per cent in 2022, to between 3.5-4.0 per cent in 2023. Inflation in 2024 is expected to return to the midpoint of the Bank of Canada's target range of 1-3 per cent.
- Inflation in Whitehorse follows the national trend and therefore expected to fall to 3.8 per cent in 2023 and to 2.5 per cent in 2024.

### **INFLATION RELIEF ACROSS GOVERNMENT**

#### **Tourism and Culture:**

#### **COVID-19 Business Relief Programs**

- In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, the Government of Yukon acted quickly and decisively by implementing one of the most robust business relief programs in the country, beginning with the Yukon Business Relief Program (YBRP) in



## **Joint Corporate Note Inflation and affordability**

Finance  
Executive Council Office

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2020, which was open to any business from any sector that experienced at least a 30% revenue loss due to the pandemic.

- In that same year, Tourism and Culture (T&C) also launched the Tourism Relief and Recovery Plan (TRRP), which was reviewed and endorsed by the Yukon Tourism Advisory Board (YTAB) and industry.
- The TRRP committed \$15 million over three years to support the tourism sector and was focused on four key themes:
  - Providing tourism sector leadership;
  - Rebuilding confidence and capabilities for tourism;
  - Supporting the recovery of tourism industry operators; and
  - Refining the brand and inspiring travelers to visit.
- Through the TRRP, various financial support programs were rolled out during the course of the pandemic to sustain the tourism industry and prepare it for the eventual reopening of borders, including:
  - Tourism Accommodation Sector Supplement (TASS);
  - Tourism Non-Accommodation Sector Supplement (TNASS);
  - Culture and Tourism Non-profit Sector Supplement;
  - Great Yukon Summer (GYS) program;
  - Great Yukon Summer Freeze program;
  - ELEVATE program; and
  - A top-up to the Tourism Cooperative Marketing Fund (TCMF).

### **Community Tourism Destination Development Fund**

## **Joint Corporate Note Inflation and affordability**

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- In October 2022, the Department of Tourism and Culture announced the creation of the new Community Tourism Destination Development Fund, which is slated to run for an initial three-year term.
- The new annual funding program is available to local businesses, First Nations governments, First Nation Development entities, municipalities and not-for-profit organizations for projects that will improve tourism-related services and infrastructure.
- Projects can focus on infrastructure like accommodations, attractions, activities and amenities, and special consideration will be given to umbrella projects, where multiple organizations are working together.

### **Creative and Cultural Industries**

- In November 2021, the Department of Tourism and Culture released *Creative Potential; Advancing the Yukon's Creative and Cultural Industries*, a 10-year strategy to support the growth and development of the creative and cultural industries in the Yukon.
- The CCIS identifies 4 strategic objectives and 22 key actions, which reflect input gathered through extensive public and sector engagement.
- We have identified 10 actions in support of pandemic recovery to be completed over three years as Phase 1 implementation, which includes:
  - Modernizing existing funding;
  - Offering new funding streams;
  - Industry branding and promotion;
  - Marketing and export strategies;
  - Workshops; and

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- Labour market supports.

In 2023-24, three new funding programs will provide \$450,000 annually to the creative and cultural sectors, including:

- Express Micro-grant;
- Indigenous Artists and Cultural Carriers Micro-grant; and
- Creative and Cultural Career Advancement Fund.

### **Additional Funding Programs**

- Tourism and Culture also provides annual supports to the tourism and culture sectors through Transfer Payment Agreements (TPAs) with many NGOs across the Yukon and through a number of regular funding programs, including:
  - Advanced Artist Award;
  - Arts Fund;
  - Arts Operating Funds;
  - Cultural Industries Training Funds;
  - Culture Quest;
  - New Canadian Events Fund;
  - Touring Artist Fund;
  - Historic Properties Assistance Program;
  - Historic Resources Fund;
  - Museums Contribution Program;
  - Special Projects Capital Assistance Program (SPCAP); and

## **Joint Corporate Note Inflation and affordability**

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- Tourism Cooperative Marketing Fund;

### **Yukon Development Corporation:**

#### **Inflation Relief Rebate**

- The Inflation Relief Rebate provides \$50 per month to all non-government residential and commercial electricity customers to help ease the impacts of rising inflation.
- The IRR initially covered June, July, and August 2022, and was extended to cover October, November, and December 2022. The budgets for these were included in 2022-23 Supplementary Estimates.
- The IRR was subsequently extended for March, April, and May 2023. The budget in 2023-24 is comprised of:
  - \$2,056,000 for program costs in April and May 2023 (costs for March 2023 are included in the 2022-23 Supplementary Estimates #2).
  - \$3,246,000 for a further three additional months. We will continue to monitor inflation and costs of living, and we anticipate this will show on electricity bills next winter when electricity bills are typically higher.

### **Economic Development:**

- Economic Development is in the process of developing a temporary paid sick leave program. Program criteria, including eligibility and duration, are currently being developed.

### **Energy, Mines and Resources:**

#### **Energy retrofits and funding to improve efficiency and offset costs**

## **Joint Corporate Note Inflation and affordability**

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- Our energy programs are successfully encouraging Yukon residents and local businesses to reduce their energy use, save money and choose low carbon options to live and move.
- Energy efficiency programs are available for the transportation sector, renewable heating sector, and the construction sector focusing on high efficiency buildings.
- For existing homes, the Energy Branch offers the Good Energy rebate program for high performance heating systems and upgrades to thermal enclosures including insulation and windows and high performance new homes. Taking these measures will save homeowners money on their energy costs.
- For commercial and institutional buildings, the Energy Branch offers rebates for greenhouse gas-reducing retrofits and renewable heating.
- For First Nation and municipal buildings, the Energy Branch offers retrofit and funding support through its Community Institutional Energy Efficiency Program.
- There are two current incentives for wood, one for harvesters and one to offset fuelwood costs:
  - In October 2022 we launched the timber harvesting incentive to provide registered Yukon timber harvesting businesses an incentive of \$10 per cubic metre of timber harvested or sold between April 1, 2022 and March 31, 2023. We have paid out \$163,000 to industry so far.
  - In September 2022, we launched a new firewood rebate to offset the increased costs of firewood for home heating. The rebate provides \$50 for each cord of firewood purchased, up to a maximum of 10 cords. As of February 14, 2023 we processed 586 applications, and paid out approximately \$69,850 in rebates for 1,389 cords of firewood.

### **Yukon Housing Corporation:**

Projects under the Five-Year Capital Plan which support housing affordability and those in need include:

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- The 47-unit housing complex at 401 Jeckell Street in Whitehorse opened in January 2023. The building provides new homes to Yukoners, including 5 three-bedroom, 12 two-bedroom, 16 one-bedroom and 14 bachelor units;
- The Opportunities Yukon 45-unit Cornerstone Development in Whitehorse opened in summer 2022 and is providing supportive living and accessible housing;
- Triplex housing units in Watson Lake, Mayo and Whitehorse were completed in spring 2022 and are providing affordable homes to families in each of these communities;
- In Old Crow, the 10-Plex Mixed-Use Housing complex is under construction with expected completion in summer 2023; and
- The 10-Plex Housing First Project in Watson Lake is included in the Northern Carve-Out. Construction is anticipated to begin in 2023-24.

### Other highlights from the plan

- More homes will be created for Yukon families in rural communities through the construction of three duplexes in Dawson City, Mayo, and Carmacks. These homes are on track for completion in summer 2023.
- The demolition of Macaulay Lodge in Whitehorse was completed in October 2022. Planning for the redevelopment of the site to support mixed commercial and residential use is underway.

### Health and Social Services:

#### **For 2022-23:**

## **Joint Corporate Note Inflation and affordability**

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- a one-time \$150 payment to social assistance recipients;
- a one-time payment of \$150 to Yukon Seniors Income Supplement recipients;
- a one-time 10 per cent additional payment to Pioneer Utility Grant recipients;
- a six-month extension of \$500 per month to caregivers of children in out of home care; and
- Committed \$100,000 to Yukon Anti-Poverty Coalition to continue to support food security across the territory.

For 2023-24:

- a quarterly top-up of \$150 to eligible Yukon Senior Income Supplement recipients; and
- a \$100 monthly increase to eligible Social Assistance recipients.

**Public Service Commission:** *(no change from Fall BN)*

### **Remote work policy in support of employees working in communities**

- In fall 2021, the Yukon government introduced a new remote work policy to support employees to continue working remotely in the long term.
- Implementing the new remote work policy is an action in the Our Clean Future strategy, as people are supported to work from home and reduce their emissions by commuting less.
- The new remote work policy also enables employees to work remotely from Yukon communities outside of Whitehorse, in some circumstances.
- The Public Service Commission will strive to support more long-term remote work arrangements throughout the Yukon government where it makes sense, and will track data on long-term arrangements going forward.

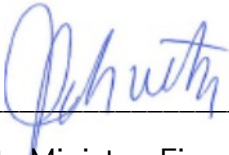
# Session Briefing Note

**FIN TAB #26**  
**ECO TAB #73**  
**Spring 2023**

## Joint Corporate Note Inflation and affordability

Finance  
Executive Council Office

Approved by:



April 24, 2023

a/Deputy Minister, Finance

Approved

2023 04 21



Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

Approved



### **Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Update on Calls to Action**

Executive Council  
Office

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#### **Recommended response:**

- Reconciliation is an ongoing process, and the Government of Yukon is continuing our work to respond to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.
- We are working collaboratively with First Nations to advance progress in key areas including health and social services, education, justice and heritage, through the Yukon Forum Joint Priority Action Plan.
- We are also working with Yukon First Nations to implement Yukon's *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit+ People Strategy*, which will further advance reconciliation and address the Calls to Action.

#### **Additional response:**

- The Government of Yukon and Yukon First Nations governments are leaders in demonstrating a collaborative approach to reconciliation.
- At the Yukon Forum in November 2022, we discussed the approach to implementing and reporting on the Calls to Action with Yukon First Nations.
- We will continue our collaborative work to implement and report on the Calls to Action, including implementing the *Putting People First* recommendations for health and social services.

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#### **Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The Yukon government (YG) previously made public its intention to fulfill its commitments to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's (TRC) Calls to Action.
- The Calls to Action were a topic at the November 29, 2022 Yukon Forum.

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#### **Background:**

- The TRC report, *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future*, was released in June 2015. It contains 94 Calls to Action focused on redressing the harms resulting

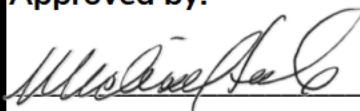
## **Truth and Reconciliation Commission – Update on Calls to Action**

Executive Council  
Office

from Residential Schools and creating better relations between the federal, provincial and territorial governments and Indigenous Peoples. Thirty-two of the Calls to Action relate directly to YG.

- YG and Yukon First Nations (YFNs) collaborate on addressing the Calls to Action through the Yukon Forum Joint Priority Action Plan.
- YG has taken steps to address the Calls to Action, including:
  - establishing the position of Assistant Deputy Minister of First Nations Initiatives at the Department of Education, signing an agreement to establish a YFN School Board, and entering into education agreements with all YFNs (speaks to Calls 7 and 10 directed to the Federal government);
  - supporting Indigenous athletes and the North American Indigenous Games (Call 88);
  - implementing the YFN Procurement Policy (relates to Call 92) and the Representative Public Service Plan: *Breaking Trail Together* (relates to Call 7);
  - working with YFNs and Yukon Indigenous women's groups to implement Yukon's *Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Girls and 2-Spirit+ People Strategy* (MMIWG2S+ Strategy) (relates to Call 41);
  - participating at the Trilateral Table on the Wellbeing of YFN Children and Families to address gaps for culturally appropriate parenting programs (Call 5); and
  - receiving input from YFNs on Health and Social Services programming through the Mental Health Advisory Committee (relates to Call 19).

**Approved by:**



Deputy Minister, Executive Council Office

February 6, 2023

Date

**Session Briefing Note****Corporate Note – Budget Highlights**

Finance

**Embargoed until day of budget tabling**

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**Recommended response:**

- In 2023-24, the Yukon continues to demonstrate its robust position nationally with population and economic growth among the strongest in the country.
- Budget 2023-24 delivers spending initiatives aimed at making life more affordable for Yukoners while also including several inflation relief measures to help combat the rising cost of goods.
- This budget continues to invest in the Yukon's health and social system and includes investments in new and expanded health services through the implementation of *Putting People First*. This includes addressing the substance-use health emergency and supporting the mental health of Yukoners.
- It delivers on our commitment to support a green economy with investments outlined in *Our Clean Future*.
- There are also strategic investments in infrastructure, particularly in housing for the most vulnerable. Other investments in housing include funds for land development, investments in housing projects in Dawson City, Watson Lake and Teslin, subsidies and supports for renters and funding for various affordable and community housing projects.
- Like in previous budgets, Budget 2023-24 continues to build relationships and further reconciliation with Yukon First Nations.

**Session Briefing Note****Corporate Note – Budget Highlights**

Finance

**Embargoed until day of budget tabling**

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**Additional response:**

- The Yukon government is delivering on its commitment to grow a strong and resilient economy while ensuring robust, sustainable fiscal management.
- A surplus of 2.49 per cent of expenditures serves as a prudent fiscal management tool and demonstrates the ability of the government to address unforeseen events without going into a deficit.
- The fiscal summary includes a \$50 million contingency for presently undefined expected expenditures in 2023-24. This will not affect the Yukon's forecast fiscal position and allows the government to remain transparent about potential pressures.

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**Context—this may be an issue because:**

- The 2023-24 Main Estimates will be debated during the March 2023 legislative session.
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**Background:**

- The 2023-24 Main Estimates include a surplus of \$48.2 million and year-end debt of \$374.8 million.
- Total revenue is expected to be \$1.58 billion in 2023-24. This is an increase of \$115.2 million or 7.3 per cent from the 2022-23 Main Estimates.
- Forecast O&M expenditures total \$1.45 billion, with O&M recoveries offsetting this amount by \$130.9 million. This is an increase of 2.6 per cent in net O&M expenditures from the 2022-23 Main Estimates.

**Session Briefing Note****Corporate Note – Budget Highlights**

Finance

**Embargoed until day of budget tabling**

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- Forecast capital expenditures total \$483.8 million with recoveries of \$164.5 million. This is a 9.9 per cent decrease in net capital expenditures from the 2022-23 Main Estimates. This represents a reduction of \$63 million from last year's capital budget. This reduction reflects a sustainable approach to budgeting in the territory following elevated capital spending over the last two years, which helped stimulate Yukon's economy during the pandemic.
- There are 5,332.0 FTEs in the 2023-24 budget, which is a decrease of 89.1 FTEs from 2022-23.

**Approved by:**\_\_\_\_\_  
a/Deputy Minister, Department

February 23, 2023

\_\_\_\_\_  
Approved

## **Session Briefing Note**

**Corporate Note – Fin/HPW 2022-23**

## **Supplementary Overview**

**Embargoed until day of budget tabling**

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**TAB YG06**

**Spring 2023**

### **Recommended response:**

- Overall, the changes outlined in the Supplementary Estimates #2 show a government that continues to make sure Yukoners and our economy remain healthy as we emerge from the pandemic while also responding to new and emerging challenges.
- Inflation continues to have an impact on Yukoners, as well as an impact on government projects. Several changes included as part of this Supplementary Estimates are in response to higher costs or work progressing faster than planned.
- The capital budget has no overall gross change in this Supplementary Estimates, but this is not because no adjustments were made. Major projects are still getting the resources they need to reach completion, but other projects were decreased to reflect timelines and funds were reallocated accordingly.
- The increase of \$37.5 million for the Department of Highways and Public Works is being offset by deferrals and offsets in other projects.

## Session Briefing Note

### Corporate Note – Fin/HPW 2022-23

### Supplementary Overview

**Embargoed until day of budget tabling**

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**TAB YG06**

**Spring 2023**

#### Additional response:

- The largest expenditures are on three important capital projects, accounting for \$53.8 million altogether.
- The first is the replacement of the Nisutlin Bay Bridge. This increase covers higher costs and an accelerated schedule. The additional work on this project results in an increase of \$35.8 million as part of this Supplementary Estimate.
- We also provided additional funding for building the Carmacks Bypass, which is part of the Yukon Resource Gateway Program. Work in this area makes up \$11.8 million of the Capital increase.
- The third project is the construction of the Dempster Fibre Line, which will open a second fibre optic link instead of relying just on one, and so give Yukoners more reliable access to the internet as well as necessary redundancy. This project includes a proposed increase of \$5.7 million.



## Session Briefing Note

### Corporate Note – Fin/HPW 2022-23

### Supplementary Overview

**Embargoed until day of budget tabling**

**TAB YG06  
Spring 2023**

- These increases are offset by decreases in capital. The most significant reductions can be seen in the Yukon Housing Corporation. This is largely the result of revised timelines for various projects and initiatives as well as lower uptake in application-based programs, but also accounts for the housing and building cycle as Normandy Living, Cornerstone and the 47-unit 4th and Jeckell facility are all ready and taking in clients and we are now shifting towards building new relationships for potential future projects.

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#### Context—this may be an issue because:

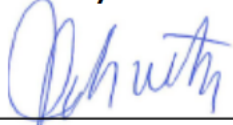
- The 2022-23 Supplementary Estimates #2 is tabled in the spring session and will be the subject of debate.

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#### Background:


- Opposition may request an explanation for the changes included as part of the Supplementary Estimates #2.

#### Approved by:

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
a/Deputy Minister, Finance

March 02, 2023  
\_\_\_\_\_

Approved

  
\_\_\_\_\_  
Deputy Minister, HPW

March 02, 2023  
\_\_\_\_\_

Approved